



SAPTHAGIRI (ENGLISH)
SPIRITUAL ILLUSTRATED MONTHLY
Volume : 53, Issue : 8
January-2023, Price Rs.20/-
No. of Pages - 56

TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS

SAPTHAGIRI

SPIRITUAL ILLUSTRATED MONTHLY

JANUARY 2023

Rs. 20/-



RATHASAPTHAMI

on 28-01-2023

SHRIPRASAD

TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS

A view of Sri Padmavathi Ammavari Brahmotsavams held from 20.11.2022 to 29.11.2022. On this occasion, the Dy C.M. of A.P. Sri K. Narayana Swami offered sacred silk clothes to Sri Padmavathi Ammavaru on behalf of A.P. State Government. As part of Brahmotsavam, Ammavaru took celestial ride on various vahanams on all the days to bless Her devotees along the four mada streets in Tiruchanur. As part of this, the Goddess was adorned Lakshmi Kasula Haram of Srivaru during Gaja and Garuda vahanas. The annual Pushpayagam was also held after the completion of the annual brahmotsavams. On this occasion, TTD Trust Board Chairman Sri Y.V. Subba Reddy along with his wife, TTD Executive Officer Sri A.V. Dharma Reddy, I.D.E.S. JEOs Smt Sada Bhargavi, I.A.S. (H&E) and Sri V. Veerabrahmam, I.A.S. and other higher officials participated.





BHAGAVADGITA

Saṁkaro narakāyai'va
Kulaghnānāṁ kulasya ca
Patanti pitaro hy eṣāṁ
luptapiṇḍodakakriyāḥ

Admixutre of blood damns the destroyers
of the race as well as the race itself.
Deprived of the offerings of rice and water
(Sraddha, Tarpana etc), the manes of their
race also fall.

(Chapter- I, Sloka-42)

INVOCATION

Poḍagaṇṭimayya mimmu puruṣōttamā mammu
Neḍayakavayya kōṇēṭirāyaḍā..

..poḍagaṇṭi..

Kōri mammu nēlinaṭṭi kuladaivamā! cālā
nēraci peddalicciva nidhānamā
gāraṇiṇci dappidīrcu kālamēghamā! māku
cēruva cittamulōni śrīnivāsuḍā!..

..poḍagaṇṭi..

bhāvimpakaivasamaina pārijātamā! mammu
cēvadēra gācinaṭṭi cintāmaṇī
kāṇiṇci kōrikaliccē kāmādhēnuvā! mammu
tāvai rakṣiṇcēṭi dharaṇīdharā!..

..poḍagaṇṭi..

ceḍanīka bratikiṇcē siddhamantramā! rōgā –
laḍaci rakṣiṇcē divyauṣadhamā!
baḍibāyaka tiriḡē prāṇabandhuḍā! Mammu
gaḍiyiṇcivaṭṭi śrī vēṅkaṭaṇādhūḍā..

..poḍagaṇṭi..

- Annamacharya



We beheld your presence, O Purushottama!
Do not let go of us, O Konetiraayaa!

You ruled over us lovingly by your own wish, O family deity!
You are the real treasure our fore-fathers bestowed upon us after realizing!
You are the dark blue cloud who quenches our thirst in a loving manner!
You are Srinivasa, seated in our minds!

You are the Parijatha which we have gained by mere thought!
You are the Chintamani who protects us to our hearts' content!
You are the Kamadhenu who blesses us and grants desired boons!
Being our only refuge, You protect us. O Dharanidhara!

O life saving powerful incantation,
O disease destroying divine medication,
O inseparable soul – relation,
You won over us, O Lord Sree Venkatanatha!!

Sankeerthana Courtesy

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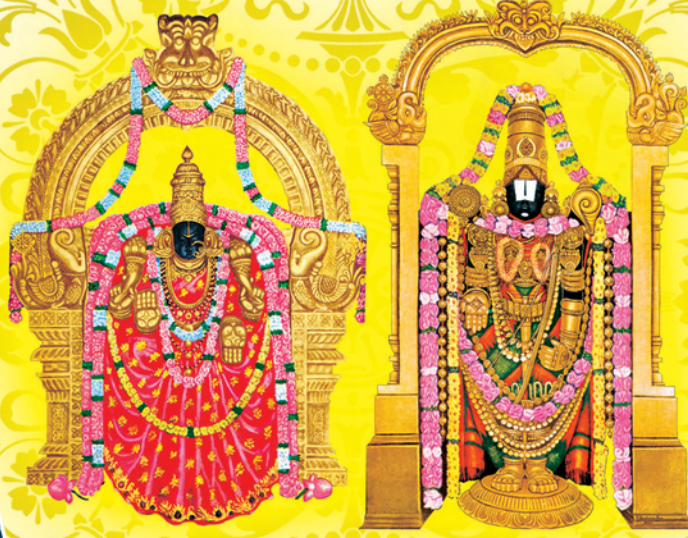


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SAPTHAGIRI

SPIRITUAL ILLUSTRATED MONTHLY



(Published in English, Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, Hindi, and Sanskrit languages)

Details of Subscription

Single copy: Rs 20/-

Annual Subscription: Rs. 240/-

Life Subscription (only for 12 yrs): Rs.2400/-

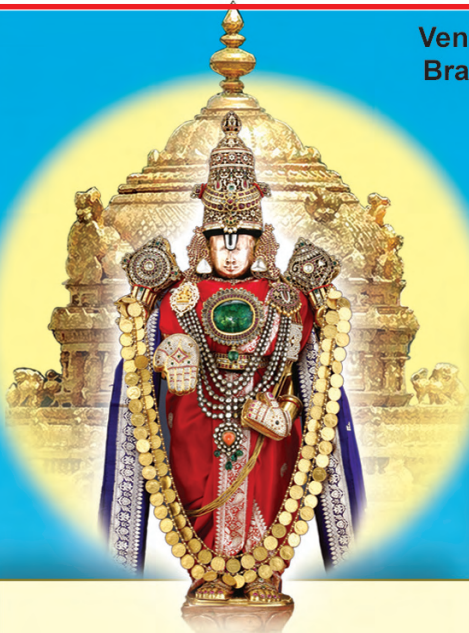
Annual Subscription for overseas countries: Rs. 1030/-

This change is applicable only for new subscribers.

For Details, please contact:

The Chief Editor, T.T.D. Press Compound, K.T. Road, Tirupati - 517507

Phone: 0877 - 2264363, 2264543.



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Venkatesa Samo Devo
Na Bhuto na Bhavishyati

SAPTHAGIRI

Vol. 53

JANUARY 2023

No. 8

CONTENTS

Sankranthi	- Ms. Sandhyasrinidhi SVS	- 7
Suryaaraadhana	- Dr. C.V. Sulochana	- 10
Vaikunta Ekadasi - A Celestial Spectacle at Tirumala	- Sri Atthi Rangarajan	- 12
Metlotsavam	- Sri Anandatheerthacharya	- 14
108 Divya Desams	- Sri Ramesh D. Kandadai	- 17
The Glory of Nara-Narayana	- Dr. S.Vaishnavi	- 20
Significance of Rathasapthami	- Prof. Padmanabha Rao	- 22
Universal Wisdom of Vemana	- Sri K. Damodar Rao	- 24
Pausha - The Bountiful	- Smt. D.K. Ahana Lakshmi	- 25
Basara - Sri Gnana Saraswathi Devi	- Dr. I.L.N. Chandra Sekhara Rao	- 31
Sangeeta Pithamaha - Sri Purandaradasa	- Smt. Harini Pagadal	- 34
Tirumalai Ozhugu	- Dr. M. Varadarajan	- 37
Annamayya's Vignettes of Wisdom	- Prof. M. Rajagopalachary	- 39
Dutiful Mother	- Smt. Rajalakshmi T.S.	- 40
Celestial Tiruppavai	- Sri N. Rajagopalan	- 42
The Tirumala Temple	- Dr. N. Ramesan	- 44
The Significance of Knowledge	- Dr. K. Sudhakar Rao	- 47
Quiz for Children		- 50
General Predictions	- Daivajna Chaturanana Rani Narasimha Murthy	- 51
Salutation to Lord Surya (Picture Story)	- Sri L.R.D. Murthy	- 52

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Sri P. RAMARAJU, M.A.,
Special Officer
T.T.D.Press, TIRUPATI - 517 507.

Photos
Sri P.N.SEKHAR
Photographer, TTD
Sri B.VENKATARAMANA
Asst. Photograher, TTD

Subscription Details :
Single Copy : Rs.20/-
Annual Subscription : Rs. 240/-
Life Subscription : Rs. 2400/- (for 12 years only)
Annual Foreign Subscription : Rs. 1030/-

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Toll Free No. 1800-425-4141
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Front Cover : Sri Malayappa Swami on Suryaprabha Vahanam, Tirumala
Back Cover : Goddess Saraswathi Devi

(Art by Sri P. Siva Prasad)



SANKRANTHI – A HARVEST FESTIVAL

Sankranthi is a delightful festival for farmers. It is marked by religious fervour and health significance like any other Indian festival. It is a symbol of social unity and communal harmony.

Sankranti means the movement that augurs well. It indicates the change in the movement of the Sun as per the solar calendar from south to the north. It is called Makara Samkramana as the sun moves from Sagittarius and enters Capricorn, the 10th house of the zodiac (Makara). Each Ayana lasts for six months.

It is said that gods sleep during the six-month period of Dakshinayana and are awake for the remaining period, Uttarayana. Uttarayana is a holy period and those who die during this period are said to attain salvation. That is why Bhishma though fatally wounded in the Mahabharata war waits on his Ampashayya, the bed of arrows, till the commencement of Uttarayana to exercise his choice of *Ichchamarana* (dying wish) and breathe his last.

The festival has a special significance for farmers as it happens to be the harvesting season. It is known as 'Pedda Panduga' in Andhra Pradesh, Makara Sankranti in Karnataka, Telangana, Maharashtra, Kerala, Pongal in Tamil Nadu, Magh Bihu in Assam, Magha Mela in parts of central and north India, etc. It is celebrated for four days consecutively known as Bhogi, Sankranti, Kanuma and Mukkanuma. Bhogi is marked by burning logs of wood (kola) in the early hours and waving them around to get rid of the drushti dosha. Bhogi fire protects us from winter cold. Sankranti is dedicated to the Sun-God. Pongal, Nuv Pongal or Ven Pongal are offered to the Sun-God as naivedya.

Rangolies, beautiful drawings in different colours in the frontyards of houses, festoons of mango leaves on the doorframes, Haridasas and Gangireddu people with dancing Basavannas in the streets, kite-flying by young and old—are a special attraction of this festival. The ambience seems to welcome Dhanya Lakshmi. Exposure to sunlight in the name of these customs improves health. Kanuma is a cattle festival in which the cattle are well-decorated and worshipped. Mukkanuma is a thanksgiving day by farmers to their relatives and friends for their support in harvesting. If the farmer is happy, the people of a country are happy. It is an auspicious day for Srivaishnavas as Andal concluded her 30 day-long Srivrata and had blissful union with Lord Ranganatha by marrying him. In Tirumala, Andal's Tiruppavai is recited instead of Suprabhata during the Dhanurmasa.

May this Sankranti augur well for the farmers with abundance of crops and consequent happiness with the blessings of Lord Venkateswara!!



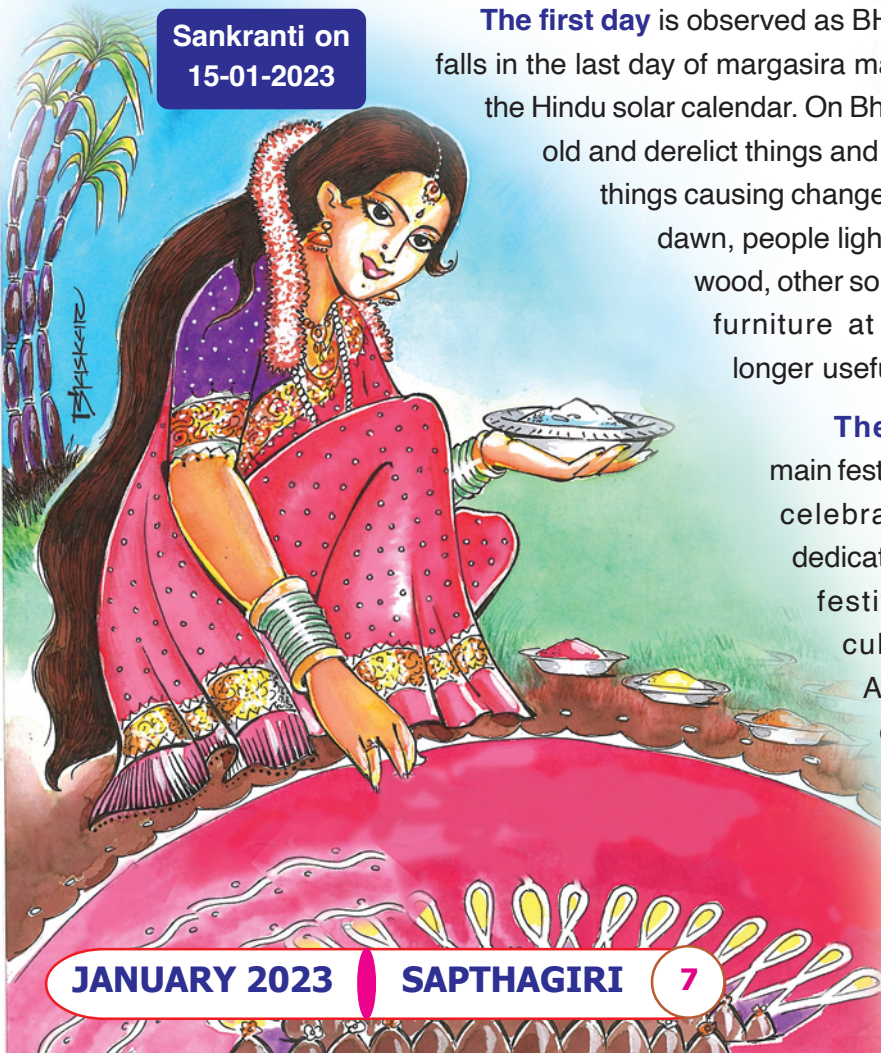
Sankranti is a festival that is celebrated in almost all the states of India on 14th of January every year (15th on every leap year). The festivities are unique and beautiful in every way possible. It is known by many names. Pongal, Maaghi, Uttarayan, Magha and many more. As all the roads lead to Rome, though it has many names, the main motive of celebrating Sankranti is to welcome the most joyous harvest season. It is usually celebrated for four days at the minimum. In some states like Gujarat, it's celebrated for 2 days while some states like Uttar Pradesh observe Sankranti by taking a ritualistic bath in the holy river Ganga.

**Sankranti on
15-01-2023**

The first day is observed as BHOGI. It usually falls in the last day of margasira maasa according to the Hindu solar calendar. On Bhogi, people discard old and derelict things and concentrate on new things causing change or transformation. At dawn, people light bonfires with logs of wood, other solid-fuels, and wooden furniture at home that are no longer useful.



The second day, the main festival; 'SANKRANTHI' is celebrated. This day is dedicated to God Surya. This festival holds traditional cultural significance. According to various Indian calendars, the Sun's movement changes and the days from this day onwards become



lengthier and warmer and so the Sun-God is worshipped on this day as a great benefactor. The withdrawing winter entails a change in food habits and intake of nourishing and rich food. So, on this day, people make different types of delicious foods and share it with their families and friends.

One of them is “Pongal” : The name “Pongal” means “To Boil” in Tamil. Pongal is prepared from rice and lentils. It is the most iconic food of South due to its rich ingredients, loaded nutrients and finger-licking taste. The blend of rice, spices, pepper, moong dal, cashews, chillies and salt make up the protein-rich Ven Pongal. It also has many health benefits. It stimulates digestion, by keeping your tummy full for a long time thereby curbing unwanted cravings. The ingredients including pepper and ginger are also helpful in preventing constipation and enhancing digestion. If you are worried about the cholesterol level of ven Pongal, then you should have to get over it. This is because the iconic food has no cholesterol but is loaded with healthy fats. It is well-known that ginger works well when it comes to controlling nausea. Similarly, pepper joins the anti-nausea spices team to oppress the nauseating feel and makes you feel better from nausea instantly. It is also filled with nutrients which are required for healthy functioning of our body.

DANCE AND CULTURE : People wear new clothes and in states like Orissa, Punjab, Haryana and Delhi, people gather together and dance and sing along a bonfire. It is known as Lohri in Punjab. It is also a tradition in some parts of Andhra Pradesh to make cow dung cakes and put them in a Rangoli. Young girls, women then dance around it while singing songs. It is called ‘Gobbemma’ (A lump of cowdung worshipped as a Goddess on this occasion by the girls).

Let’s go over some traditions that are observed during Sankranthi and the reason why; during Sankranthi.

HARIDAS AND BASAVANNA : Another common sight one looks for, from a few days ahead of Sankranthi is Haridas and Gangireddu (Bull) with Basavanna. Haridas is one who goes from house to house singing songs and seeking alms. Haridas wears bangles on his hands, anklets on his feet, adorns a silk dhoti and a silk scarf is tied around his waist, a flower necklace around his neck and tilak done neatly. The Bulls are decorated with colourful clothes, colours and ornaments. They are trained to do some actions as per the instructions of the master, to bow down, to say Namaskaram, nodding their head to say yes or no to questions put to them, a little bit of dancing and so on. People offer old clothes, money and food grains to them. Some



believe that Haridas’s melodious rendition of Sundarakanda or Bhagavatam on Sankranthi day brings a new auspicious beginning in our lives. A belief is that Lord Vishnu comes from Vaikuntham in the form of Haridas to bless those who decorate the Gobbemmas in front of the house and those who remember Harinama.

RANGAVALLI : On this day, houses are decorated with colourful Rangavalli (also known as muggu/rangoli) and flowers. The beautiful yet simple geometric designs come in different styles and designs. Muggulu/Rangavallis are thought to bring prosperity to homes. It is a sign of invitation to welcome people, including Lakshmi, the Goddess of prosperity and wealth into our homes. There is also a scientific reason behind this beautiful art. When a person looks at a geometric pattern, it manifests into vibrations inside the mind of the



observer that in turn calms the mind. The colours used in these for Sankranti also have a special significance. White signifies coolness and purity, red signifies strength, yellow signifies richness, green signifies harmony, orange signifies sacrifice and blue signifies happiness.

FLYING KITES : Kite flying is traditionally observed as a part of sankranti festival in some parts of Rajasthan and Karnataka. Apart from these states, Gujarati people also keenly await this festival to fly kites, called 'patang'. Kites for Uttarayan are made of special light-weight paper and bamboo and are mostly rhombus shaped with central spine and a single bow. On this occasion the sky is filled with kites, and youngsters engage in contests trying to cut each other's strings. According to some beliefs, people fly kites on Makar Sankranti in order to be exposed

to the sun rays. This way people can get rid of skin infections and illnesses that are associated with winter.

The third day of the four-day festival 'KANUMA', is dedicated to the cattle and other domestic animals. The cattle are decorated, especially cows, they are offered bananas, a special meal and worshipped. They are allowed to roam free and fed sweet rice and sugar cane. Some people decorate the horns with metallic colours.

The fourth and last day of the four-day festival is 'MUKKANUMA'. On this day, many families hold reunions. It is a day to thank relatives and friends for their support in the harvest. It started as a farmers festival, called as 'Uzhavar Thirunaal' in Tamilnadu.

Oh! How blessed we are to be born in such a country where every year, we celebrate the seasonal changes in such an exciting way? Unfortunately, these customs are ignored in today's world. Labelling them old fashioned and traditional, we're going far from basic hygiene and cleanliness. In search of gold, we're losing diamonds. So, this Sankranti, let's take a pledge to change our mindset and not label customs - unnecessary.



The Garlands of Sri Goda Devi Decorating LORD VENKATESWARA AT TIRUMALA

Sri Venkateswara Swamy, the presiding deity of Tirumala is being adorned with the garlands brought from Sri Govindarajaswami temple in Tirupati on Kanuma day every year . These garlands are the presentations of Sri Godadevi (Andal) as part of festival called 'Sri Goda Parinayotsavam'. The holy garlands are first brought to Pedda Jeeyar Mutt at Tirumala and later they are brought to Srivari temple with Mangala Vaidyams in a holy procession. Later these garlands were adorned to the main deity.





- Dr.C.V. Sulochana

The Sun is only the visible God in the sky. He is given great importance in our Sanathana Dharma. Even in Bhagavadgita Lord Krishna said "I am the Sun". That is why Sun is called as 'Pratyaksha Narayana'. His father is sage Kasyapa and mother Aditi. Hence he is called 'Aditya'. He is also called with the names Mitra, Ravi, Bhanu, Khaga, Pusha, Marichi, Savitha, Arka and Bhaskara. In addition to this he has twelve different forms, collectively called 'Dwadasa Aditya'. They are Vivasvan, Aryaman, Tvashta, Savitr, Bhaga, Dhatu, Mitra, Varuna, Amsa, Pusha, Indra and Vishnu. It is said that the Sun shines with different Aditya roopams in different months of the year. He is also worshipped in tandem (one after other) with Brahma in the morning, Siva at noon and Vishnu in the evening.

Makara Sankranti

The Sun takes a month to cross each zodiac sign and takes a year to come around 12 zodiac signs. The movement of the Sun from one zodiac sign to another zodiac sign is called Sankranti. Among 12 Sankranties Makara sankranti is very famous. When the Sun moves into capricorn zodiac, it is called 'Makara Sankranti'. The Sun is highly revered on Makara Sankranti. From this day the Sun begins its northward journey or uttarayana journey. Hence this festival is also called 'Uttarayana'. In Tamilnadu it is called 'Pongal'. Pongal is also a name of a dish that is prepared specially and offered to Surya bhagavan during this festival.

Ratha Sapthami

Another auspicious day which is completely dedicated to the Sun is 'Ratha sapthami'. It falls every year on sapthami tithi (seventh day) of sukla paksham (bright fortnight) in Magha month. It is also called 'Surya Jayanti'. On this day onwards Lord Surya shines with his warmth and brightness. i.e. it indicates the arrival of summer.

On this day devotees should wake up before dawn and observe holy bath with jilledu akulu (calotropis / Arka leaves). It is believed that those who observe holy bath with jilledu akulu on this particular day are freed from all sort of ailments and are blessed with good health. Hence it is also called 'Arogya sapthami'. After having holy bath they should give "Arghyam" to Surya bhagavan. i.e. offering water to Sun through a kalash (made of copper) by holding it in Namaskara Mudra. After giving Arghyam the devotees should perform Ratha sapthami pooja with dhoop, deep and naivedyam.

Worship of Lord Surya in Puranas

1. When Lord Sri Rama was perplexed in the battle field, while fighting with Ravana, The sage Agastya came there and preached 'Aditya Hridayam' to Sri Rama whose verses glorify the Sun God. With the power of this mantra Rama could defeat Ravana.

2. The yadava king Satrajit, the father of Satyabhama, the wife of lord Krishna was a great devotee of Surya Bhagavan. With the divine grace of Surya Bhagavan, he got Samantakamani (a type of gem) which can produce gold every day.
3. Once Samba, the son of Lord Krishna was affected by leprosy. In order to get rid of this deadly disease Samba performed a severe penance for 12 years for Surya Bhagavan. Then he was cured.
4. When Pandavas and their wife Draupadi started their 12 year exile, they were worried about how they were going to provide food for the sages who accompanied them into the forest. Then Yudhishtira, the eldest among the Pandavas prayed to Sun god. Pleased by his devotion Surya gave a bowl, called 'Akshaya patra'. This bowl used to provide food throughout the day until Draupadi takes her food.

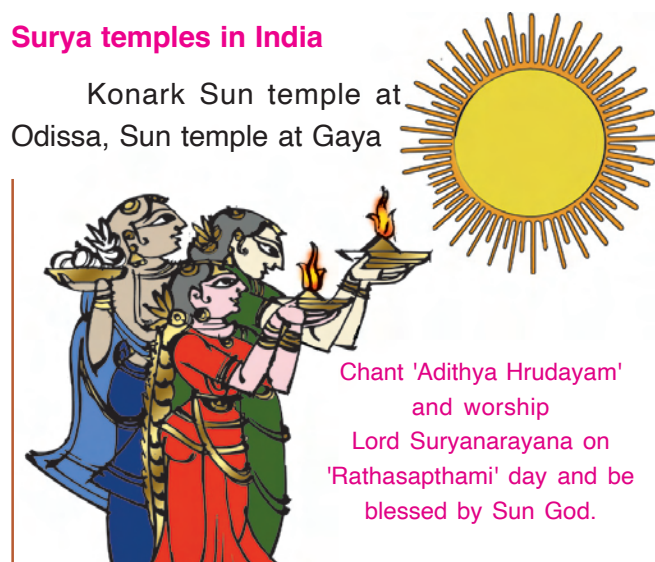
From the above myths it is known that the Sun is the giver of victory, health and wealth.

The Sun in Astrology

As per vedic astrology the Sun is considered one of the most important planets. It represents authority and dominance. The Sun gives will power, courage, confidence and bless the native with good leadership skills.

Surya temples in India

Konark Sun temple at Odissa, Sun temple at Gaya



Chant 'Adithya Hrudayam' and worship Lord Suryanarayana on 'Rathasapthami' day and be blessed by Sun God.

in U.P., Modhera Sun temple at Gujarat, Surya pawar temple at Assam, Surya temple at Kumbakonam, Surya narayana temple arasavalli in Srikakulam district of A.P., Suryanarayana temple at Tiruchanoor in Tirupati district of A.P. are famous Surya temples.

Surya Namaskaras

Ancient scriptures preach that salutations or namaskaras are very dear to Surya Bhagavan. Salutation to Sun god or Surya namaskara is not only a way to worship him but also a great Yogasadhana. It consists of 12 yoga poses which has to be done in a sequence. Surya namaskara has to be done during Sun rise and Sun set facing Surya Bhagavan.

Benefits of Surya Namaskaras

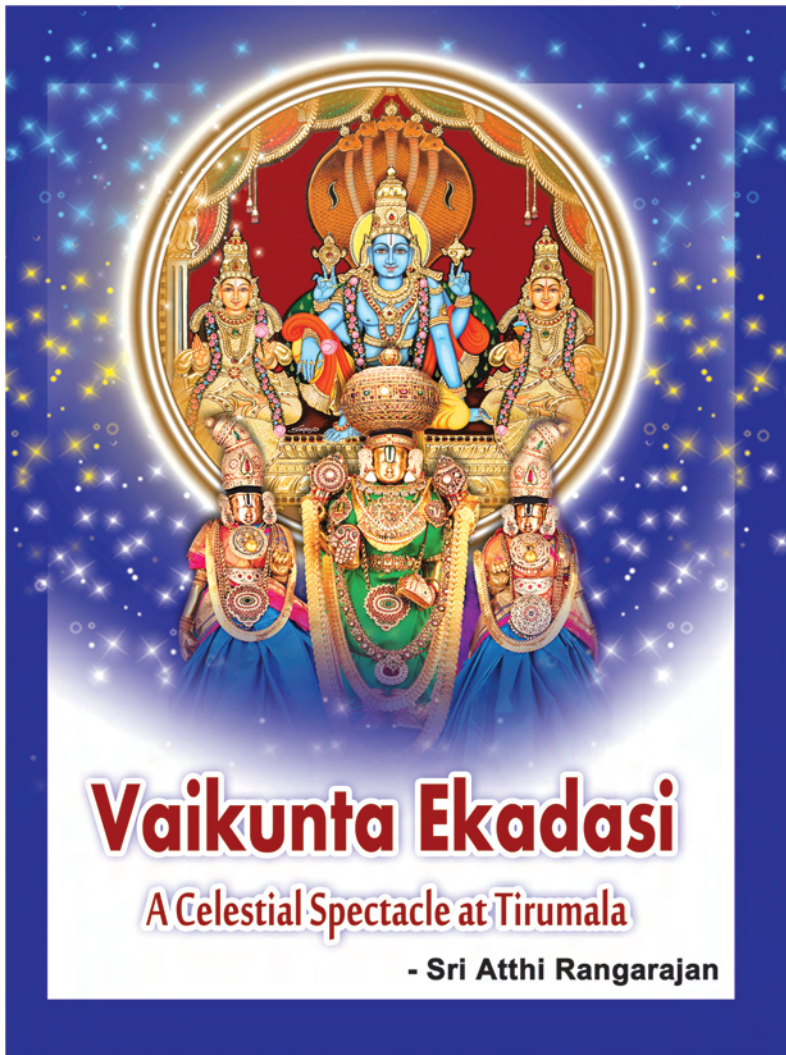
Enhances Blood circulation, Improves the functioning of digestive system, Weight loss, Glowing skin and Luscious hair, Strengthen muscles and joints, Activates the heart.

In modern aspect, apart from mythological and astrological aspects, the Sun is the ultimate source of energy. Without Sun there is no light, no heat, no rain, no vegetation and no food. Further the Sun is the best source of vitamin D. This vitamin is made from cholesterol in our body when our body is exposed to the Sun. Vitamin D helps in maintaining healthy bones and teeth and in regulating inflammation and immune function.

For the last three years we are facing the problem of Covid-19. The preventive measures that can protect us from contracting the virus are only the physical distancing and proper hygiene. Research also shows that having healthy levels of vitamin D can also help to keep immune system healthy and may protect against respiratory illnesses. Hence getting enough sunlight is very important for maintaining optimal vitamin D levels.

Worship Lord Surya and be blessed with good health.





With Maha Lakshmi by His side, Sri Maha Vishnu reclining on the huge serpent bed of Adishesha in the milky ocean is a divine sight to behold. Reaching the Vaikunta Lokam and clinging on to His lotus feet is the ultimate goal and purpose of one's life.

'Vaikunta Ekadasi' is one such divine opportunity to achieve this goal. The day, which is most revered among several significant events in a Hindu calendar year, plays a very important role in letting every individual ascend the path of liberation. Of the 24 Ekadasis witnessed in a year, this Ekadasi observed in 'Shukla Paksha' in the Dhanurmasam (falling in the months of Margasira/Pushya) is called 'Vaikunta Ekadasi'. This is also called 'Mukkoti Ekadasi'.

According to mythology, it is on this day that the celestial beings led by Brahma rushed to Vaikunta and

pleaded with Maha Vishnu to save them from the demonic acts of Ravana. It is on this occasion that Maha Vishnu made an appearance before the crores of residents of Devaloka and assured them help. This shows that the God, who is full of mercy towards His devotees, offers unconditional support to alleviate their problems.

Madhukaitaba

Another reference pertains to the slaying of the twin-demons 'Madhukaitaba' by Maha Vishnu. After they were killed, the demons attained a divine form and appealed to the God to offer liberation to all those performing 'Ekadasi Puja' and approaching Him through the northern entrance (Uttara Dwaram) on this day. God, who is synonymous to kindness, readily accepted the proposal and gave the word 'Thathasthu'. Hence this day 'Vaikunta Ekadasi' came to be known as the golden moment for every devotee wishing to avoid rebirth and attain salvation.

The day is generally known for fasting and staying awake. The devout all over the world attach utmost significance to undertaking fast on this day and pray to the Almighty for liberation. In the real sense, undertaking fast does not only mean staying away from food and enduring hunger and sleep. The inherent meaning is to keep away from worldly pleasures and mundane activities by chanting 'Hari Nama' to stay connected with the power within.

Not only humans, even the Devas and Asuras observed fast on this auspicious day before churning the milky ocean. It was then their 'Ksheera Sagara Mathanam' led to the appearance of Goddess Mahalakshmi from the ocean to bless them.

**Vaikunta Ekadasi on
02-01-2023**

Murasura

An interesting tale associated with the day is the appearance of 'Ekadasi Devi'. Once upon a time in Krutha Yuga, a demon called 'Murasura' defeated the Devas and tortured them. Upon the request of Devas, Sri Maha Vishnu entered the battlefield, fought with him for a thousand years and got thoroughly exhausted. On an Ekadasi day, he entered a cave and slept inside due to fatigue. Coming to know of Maha Vishnu's location, Murasura rushed to the spot to kill him. It was then that a divine beam of light came out of Maha Vishnu's

body and attained the shape of a young girl, armed with an array of lethal weapons. When Murasura reached the spot, the protective girl killed the demon. On waking up, Vishnu found the demon dead and offered a boon to the girl.

As she came out of the Lord's body on 'Ekadasi' Day, she is called 'Ekadasi Devi'. She requested Him to grant the boon of salvation to all those praying to her on this sacred day. Since then, those praying to 'Ekadasi Devi' are assured of a place in Vishnu Lokam.



VAIKUNTA EKADASI AT TIRUMALA

At Tirumala, Vaikunta Ekadasi has always been a special occasion for the visiting devotees and it is a feast to the eyes and solace to the soul. In the recent times, the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) management decided to observe the event as a ten-day festival by throwing open the 'Vaikunta Dwaram' to the visiting pilgrims for ten days. This is followed by a procession of Sri Malayappa Swamy's deity on the golden chariot and the conduct of 'Chakra Snanam' on Vaikunta Dwadasi.

Since this event is a celestial spectacle, lakhs of devotees plan to visit Tirumala on this occasion, but only some of them get the opportunity to pass through the 'Vaikunta Dwaram' on this day. Devotees who could not make it to Tirumala for the auspicious day in the past were a disappointed lot. Now, several thousands of pilgrims get the satisfaction of walking through the 'Uttara Dwaram' and praying to the Lord of Seven Hills for salvation, due to the decision of the authorities to keep the northern entrance open for ten days.

It is a devotional bliss to enter the 'Vaikunta Dwaram' and pass through the inner precincts around the sanctum sanctorum, which is believed to rid a person of all sins of the past and provide salvation. On this special occasion, the 'Praakaaram' is tastefully decorated with rare and exotic flowers of multiple colours, which almost looks like a heaven. Devotees get the mesmerising experience of passing through the original 'Vaikuntam' while walking on this path.

May Lord Venkateswara grant liberation the worldly shackles to all the devotees worshipping Him on this most auspicious occasion.



A view of Vaikunta Dwaram at Tirumala - file photo

Tirumala – the sacred abode of Sri Venkateswara Swamy is unparalleled in its spiritual glory. As per Bhagawan Vedavyasa, a holy place like Tirumala and God like Sri Venkateswara never existed in the past nor will there be in future. Such is the grandeur and splendour of this kshetra.

From the time immemorial, devotees be it Devatas or humans, are longing to come to this holy place and also are longing to sing paeans on God Venkateswara. While the Devatas descend from the upperworlds, humans have to make physical effort of traveling by traversing a variety of landscapes that exist from their origin and up to the destination. Both the Puranas and historical records affirm that the mode of travel to reach the hill shrine was only by climbing the hills on foot. There were no other modes of transportation ever recorded in the scriptures or historical accounts.

Lord Himself climbed the hill

God Srinivasa Himself is said to have climbed the hill on foot twice, once before marrying Goddess

Padmavati and second time after the holy marriage with the Goddess. Thus, it is the Supreme Godhead Himself who introduced ‘walking on foot’ as the only mode of transportation to the hilltop. Hence, for the last many millennia, devotees from all corners of the world are coming to the hill temple on walk.

The glory of Tirumala hill

Bhavishyottara Purana beautifully describes the spiritual glory of Tirumala hill by narrating the story of a Brahmana named Madhava. At the beginning of Kaliyuga, there was a Brahmana by name Madhava who lived in Kalahasti, Andhra Pradesh. He was well-versed in all Vedas and Shastras. He was married to a beautiful woman called Chandralekha. One day, due to the effect of bad Karma, he left his duly-wedded wife and started living with a wretched woman. After the death of his second wife, Madhava lost his interest in life and became a tramp. Soon he found his way to Tirumala hill. The mere darshan of the holy hill made him to recollect and repent for his past deeds. As he touched the foot of the

METLOTSAVAM

A Unique Spiritual Program of Dasa Sahitya Project

**- Sri Anandatheerthacharya
Special Officer
Dasa Sahitya Project, TTD, Tirupati**

14 JANUARY 2023 | SAPTHAGIRI



hill, all his sins were cleansed. Brahmadeva appeared before Madhava and advised him to climb the hill. He further advised him to leave the present physical body after taking darshan of Varaha Swamy. Thus, Madhava climbed the hill, prostrated before Varaha Swamy and left the mortal coil in Yogic method. In his subsequent birth, Madhava became Akasha Maharaja, the father of Goddess Padmavati and father-in-law of God Venkateswara. This episode clearly shows the significance of climbing the hill with devotion and the fruits it reaps i.e., liberation from accrued sins.

The history of Tirumala temple is replete with innumerable instances where the most rich and powerful emperors, queens and nobles too have walked the whole path to reach God's abode. In spite of the comforts available to them at their beck and call, the rich and powerful of the bygone eras have always walked to Tirumala temple on foot with utmost devotion.

Then what about the spiritual Gurus and Acharyas? Would they be traveling by an elephant decorated with silk draping with gold embroidery or would they be riding a horse belonging to world's best breed? Never.

All the Acharyas and Gurus have gone on a pilgrimage on foot to Tirumala from wherever they were camping. They came to Tirumala with their followers and disciples who too travelled on foot along with their spiritual masters. Those followers and disciples never displayed their displeasure or discomfort to walk through the treacherous mountain ranges and dreaded forests. Instead, they begged and pleaded with their masters to undertake Tirumala pilgrimage as many times in a year as possible. Such was the attraction cast by Sri Venkateswara. Such was the spell of spiritual bliss offered by Tirumala kshetra.

Emperors such as Sri Krishnadevaraya, Achyutaraya and Venkatapatiraya have travelled to Tirumala on many occasions on foot. Similarly, great saint Sri Ramanuja has not only travelled to Tirumala on foot but also established a system for temple management that is running smoothly to this day.



The propounder of Dvaita Siddhanta, Sri Madhvacharya carried a pilgrimage to Tirumala kshetra and observed Chaturmasya in today's Tiruchanoor.

Singing the glory of the Lord

Celebrated poet-composers such as Sri Purandaradasa, Sri Vijayadasa, Sri Gopaladasa and Sri Jagannathadasa have made it a tradition to visit Tirumala 2-3 times in a year and sing the glory of the holy place and the God.

Great saint, poet and establisher of many charities, Sri Vyasa-tirtha of Dvaita philosophy has a unique association with Tirumala temple. He was asked to act as the overseer of Tirumala temple administration from c.1486 to c.1498 by the then Vijayanagara emperor Saluva Narasimharaya. During his tenure as temple overseer and chief priest, Sri Vyasa-tirtha used to climb the hill on foot to perform all rituals to God Venkateswara. Subsequently he was climbing down on foot to attend to the mundane works that include attending to the nature's calls. This can be said as the highest example of utmost devotion and dedication towards the upkeep of sanctity of the holy place.

There is another splendid narrative about Sri Vyasa-tirtha's sacred association with Tirumala temple. Every time, the great saint was climbing the hill or coming down, he never set his foot on the holy hill. All the time and the whole way, he was climbing up or down the hill on his knees. Because, for him, the whole mountain appeared a huge, sacred Salagrama which is nothing but a rocky, physical form of Bhagawan Vishnu. One can imagine how challenging it could be to climb up and down a hill as tall as Tirumala on knees yet Sri Vyasa-tirtha continued to climb in this way for 12 long years.

METLOTSAVAM - IN MEMORY OF SRI VYASATIRTHA



As a matter of fact, the exemplary devotion of Sri Vyasatirtha who never took rest for 12 years to climb up and climb down the Tirumala temple has become the inspiration for (devotees) Dasa Sahitya Project to conduct “Metlotsavam.” This unique program is dedicated to the sacred memory of Sri Vyasatirtha and all other such noble souls who walked to the hill with utmost devotion and dedication.

Since its inception in 1979, Dasa Sahitya Project has been conducting Metlotsavams at regular intervals (4 times in a calendar year) in which thousands of devotees participate with the sole aim of worshipping Kaliyuga Daivam through Nama Sankirtana, Japa and Parayana.

Each spell of Metlotsavam begins with the arrival of the devotees (close to 3,500 per spell) at Tirupati which is followed by Akhanda Nama Sankirtana and Pravachanams. Later, on a specific day of Metlotsavam, all the devotees congregate at Alipiri Padala Mandapam to commence their travel on foot towards the God’s abode.

The congregation Muhurtham i.e., at 4:00 Puja is conducted with officials of TTD and the devotees will start Tirumala by singing the and chanting his sacred discourses by eminent along the footpath where



After reaching allowed to have the Parabrahma and subsequently offered Annadanam. Subsequently, the devotees will climb down the hill and reach Tirupati from where they will be returning to their places with hearts filled with the sacred memories of Sri Srinivasa and Tirumala kshetra (place).

As the years progressed, Metlotsavam started gaining popularity due to its ability to offer unique spiritual experience to the participants. Today, Metlotsavam has become an unforgettable divine event for thousands of devotees.

takes place at Brahma AM in the morning. A grand the participation of senior spiritual personalities. Later, climbing the holy hill of glories of Sri Venkateswara names. There will be short scholars at specific places the devotees take brief rest.

Tirumala, the devotees are darshan of Sri Srinivasa



Thirukkannapuram Thirukkannangudi Thirunagai

- Sri Ramesh D. Kandadai

These divya desams are located just a little off the coast of Bay of Bengal near Nagapattinam are a cluster of divya desams scattered around. Three of these small villages/towns are what we will look into today.

THIRUKKANNAPURAM

Location: This village is located 140 kms due east of Srirangam near (25 km north and west) the town of Nagapattinam.

Sthalapuramam: Legend has it that the local temple priest was recycling garlands due to poverty. One day when the king visited, he found human hair in the garland. Angered by this, he questioned the priest who said it was the Lord's hair. The next day when the king visited again, he found the Lord with plenty of hair and hence the name Sowriraja (Sowri is wig or hair). In another legend, a local devotee offered Pongal at night to the Lord. The temple was closed and the devotee, consequently, stood outside and made the offering. Suddenly bells could be heard from inside and the smell of hot ghee came wafting on the breeze signifying that the Lord had accepted the offering. To this day, Pongal is offered during night puja.

It is also said the Lord instructed Thirumangai alwar on Thirumandiram in this place. Hence the place is called 'Maha Mandira siddhi kshetram'. This is also one of the Panchakanna kshetrams.

Special Features: The Lord here is called 'Neelamegha Perumal' or 'Sowriraja Perumal'. The universal mother is called Kannapura Nayaki. The temple pond is called 'Nithiya theertham'. Pongal is offered during the last puja of the day.

The main deity is in the Varada hastam pose just like Kanchi Varadaraja Perumal. He also holds the Prayoga chakram.

During Vaikasi brahmotsavam, the Lord gives Trimurthy darshan in a single day – as Brahma, Vishnu and Rudra. Vibhishana is said to have prayed to see the Lord standing. The Lord asked him to come to this place.

Mangalasasanam: Interestingly this is the third most sung about sthalam (place) of the 108 with 128 songs. A majority of them, are by Thirumangai Alwar.

Nammalwar in his Thiruvaimozhi (3665) simply states that the merest mention of the name of the lord of thirukkannapuram is enough to alleviate all sufferings. What can I ask for beyond that?

Kulasekhara Alwar in Perumal Thirumozhi (719 - 7 2 9) addresses the resident of Thirukkannapuram as Raghava! As the son of Kausalya! And goes on to add that he is resting in this temple.

A view of
Thirukkannapuram
temple

17



Perialwar in his Peria Thirumozhi (71) refers to this shrine as so eternal that it does not get destroyed even during pralaya. He identifies the Lord of this place as the one that Yasoda used to carry around on her waist.

THIRUKKANNANGUDI

Location: A small village located just a few km due west of the town of Nagapattinam.

Sthalapuramam: The Sage Vasishta worshipped the Lord with a murthy made of pure butter. The Lord decided to test him one day and came in the form of a young boy. While playing he ate up the butter idol. When Vasishta saw this, he chased the boy who landed in this sthalam where many rishis were doing tapas (penance). They all gathered and requested the Lord to give darshan in this form here. The Lord consented. He is known as 'Lokanatha Perumal' (Lord of the world) or 'Damodara Narayana Perumal'. The universal mother is known as 'Lokanayaki or Aravindavalli'.

Special Features: Thirumangai Alwar robbed a golden statue to pay for his expenses in construction of compound wall at Srirangam. When he was on his way back, he rested under a tamarind tree and requested the tree to watch over the stolen gold temporarily buried below. The tree is supposed to have remained on guard all night allowing Alwar to rest undisturbed. He blessed it with the name Urangaa Pulli (non-sleeping tamarind).

The next morning the owner of the land arrived and claimed ownership of the gold because it was buried on his land. Alwar claimed he owned the land and had the proof in Srirangam. He promised to bring the proofs next day. He never turned up. This is considered as Theera Vazhakku (unsolved dispute).

Similarly, when he felt thirsty the people of village refused water because of the unsolved dispute. He cursed the wells to remain dry (oora kinnaru). Subsequently when he again slept under a maghizam tree, the tree blew cool breeze over him. The Lord came in the form of a stranger and fed Alwar and

gave him to drink. When alwar woke up, he felt rested and fed and thirst quenched. He blessed the tree to never go dry (kaayaa maghizham).

Mangalasanam: Thirumangai Alwar in Peria Thirumozhi (1748-1757) opens up by extolling the virtues of this place. In addition to being the place where the Lord who rests on Adhishesha on the sea with his divya ayudhams, it is also the place where learned elders who are well versed in ithihasas, who conduct the various yajnas live. In the succeeding stanzas he identifies the sthalam as the one in which the Lord who took various avataars such as matsya and kurma resides.

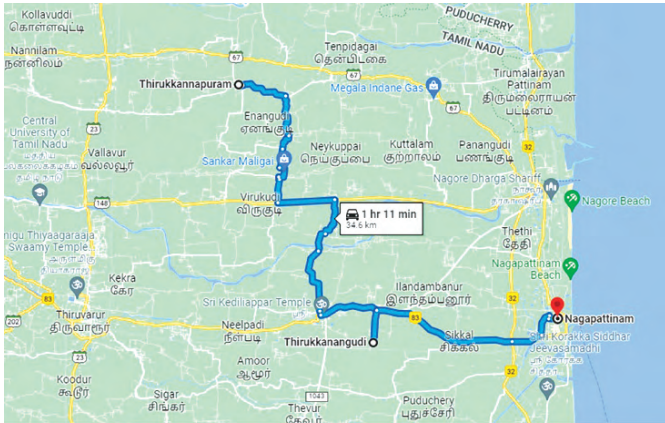
THIRUNAGAI

Location: This is a town located on the coast of Bay of Bengal 150km south of Pondicherry and 150km due east of Srirangam.

A view of Thirukkannangudi temple

18





Sthalapuranam: Lord Brahma worshipped Lord Vishnu at the local pond. The Lord satisfied with his worship appeared before him glowing in golden colour. Because of this beautiful appearance, he is known as 'Azhghian or Soundara-raja-Perumal'. The universal mother is called 'Soundara-valli' or she who is of matchless beauty. The pond is called 'Sara-pushkarani'.

The area is known as sundararnyam or beautiful forests. Legend has it that Adhishesha did penance here to attain Lord Vishnu who agreed to use him for a bed. Hence the name 'Thirunagai'.

Dhruva the son of King Utanapada did his penance guided by sage Narada at a young age to attain the special grace of Lord Vishnu here at Thirunagai.

Special Features:

There is vigraha (idol) of Lord Narasimha with eight hands here. He is seen in a rare pose that combines



Abhaya mudra, blessing Prahlada and tearing in to Hiranyakasipu.

The temple has received contributions from Pallavas, Medieval Cholas, Nayaks and Nagars.

Mangalasasanam: Thirumangai alwar in his Peria Thirumozhi (1758-1767) takes on the roll of Nayaki and expresses his undying love for the Lord. He says the Lord is staring at her directly and wonders what would happen if her mother found out. Having identified the Lord as the one who measured the worlds, she extols his charm. As Nayaki, Alwar says it is not possible to think of anyone after seeing the Lord of Nagai.

Only a small portion of the 140 plus pasurams are quoted here for lack of adequate space.





The very first verses in 'Jaya' is usually recited after having bowed in obeisance before Narayana (Lord) and Nara, (the supreme human being), Goddess Saraswati and sage Vyasa as mentioned below.

*Narayanam namaskruthya
naram chowa narothamama
Deveem saraswatheem
vyaasam thatho jayamudheerayet II*

The above verses convey that 'I bow down to Lord Krishna, who is Narayana (The Supreme), Arjuna (the supreme human being) and Goddess Saraswati'. Nara, mentioned here in the verse, is considered to be Arjuna in his previous birth. Arjuna's identity with Nara is established throughout the epic. They both performed penance for many years at Badrika Ashram (Badrinath) which was named after Goddess Lakshmi when she protected the meditating Lord Vishnu from the heat by covering Him with the Badri tree.

'Badri' refers to a berry which apparently grew abundantly in the area, and 'nath' means "Lord". Badrinath or Badrinarayana Temple is a Hindu temple dedicated to Lord Vishnu which is situated now in the town of Badrinath in Uttarakhand, India. The temple is also considered one of the 108 Divya Desams dedicated to Lord Vishnu.

Badrinath being one of the most legendary temples, has numerous mythical tales associated with it. According to one mythological tale, Lord Vishnu had performed punctilious reparation at this place. During His intense meditation, He was unaware of the severe weather conditions. To protect Him from the scorching Sun, His spouse Goddess Lakshmi acquired the shape of Badri tree and spread it over Him. Witnessing this, Lord Vishnu was pleased by her devotion and hence He named that place as 'Badrikaashram'.

The temple has colourful walls. Inside the temple lies the idol of Lord Badrinarayana, which is made up of Shaligram stone (i.e., black stone). Lord Vishnu is in standing posture holding Shankh, Sudarshana chakra and other two hands are in yoga mudra position i.e. the idol here depicts Lord Vishnu sitting in meditative posture.

Other than Lord Badri Narayana there are idols of other deities also such as Goddess Lakshmi, Nara & Narayana, Lord Hanuman, Kubera, Goddess Durga, Narasimha, Narada, Ganesha, Uddhava and vahana (vehicle) of Lord Vishnu, Garuda. This holy place is considered as one of the eight Swayam Vyakta Kshetras or self-manifested idols of Vishnu. The main shrine area houses the black stone image of Lord Badrinarayana, sitting under a gold canopy, beneath a Badri Tree.

The mountains around Badrinath are described well in the Mahabharata, when the Pandavas were said to have died one by one, while ascending the peak in the mighty Garhwal mountains called "Swargarohini" which means 'Ascent to Heaven'. The Pandavas passed through Badrinath and the town of Mana, 4 km from Badrinath, on their way to Svarga which is heaven.

Origin of Nara Narayana : Nara and Narayana took birth as sons of Dharma and his wife Murti, who was a daughter of Daksha. It was said

that Narayana took birth in four forms – Nara, Narayana, Hari and Krishna. Out of these, Nara and Narayana travelled to the hermitage of Badri in their golden wagons and engaged themselves in staunch austerities.

In Dwapara Yuga, Nara and Narayana were more popular due to their re-incarnation as Arjuna and Krishna. But the epic highlights their identity as the sacred ancient sages, born to defend dharma by opposing the demons. These two inseparable sages took avatars on earth for the welfare of mankind. Arjuna's identity as Nara is because of him being born as Indra's son and one among the five as Pandavas. There arose a situation when sage Nara has to incarnate along with Narayana. On the other hand, Indra has to take birth on earth to endure the curse of Lord Shiva. Both these inevitable conditions were merged together and resulted in Arjuna's birth.



The Story of Nara-Narayana and Karna : It is said that once a demon, who had pleased Brahma with his devotion, was granted a special boon that his life existed in the thousand kavachas (armours) that Brahma bestowed upon him and because of which no one can kill him. But, if any one of his enemies were to remove the kavachas (armours) from his body, then he would apparently lose all his powers. The Creator also granted him another boon that one who takes away even one kavacha from him will have to fight with him for a hundred years.

He began to exercise his powers for both good and evil purposes, as a result of which he was named as Sahasrakavacha (a man with hundred armours). On hearing devas' pleas, Lord Vishnu decided to help them and descended on earth in the form of two men, named Nara and Narayana. These two men challenged Sahasrakavacha to a battle, which the asura willingly accepted.

On the day of the battle, Nara engaged Sahasrakavacha in the confrontation for a hundred years while Narayana, the Lord Himself sat down to do penance. After a hundred years, Nara managed to remove one kavacha from the demon's body.

Meanwhile, Narayana took up the battle. Thus, alternating with each other, Nara and Narayana continued fighting with the asura, till he was left with only one kavacha on his body. Now Sahasrakavacha realized that he was left with the last kavacha and if that too was ripped off his body, he would die. So, he went and hid himself behind the Sun. With Sahasrakavacha having left the field, Nara and Narayana returned to heaven.

After a long time, a son was born to Kunti with the blessings of the Sun. The child was named Karna and he was born with a single kavacha. This evidently proved that Karna was none other than Sahasrakavacha who had taken rebirth as Karna.

So, once again Nara and Narayana who were Arjuna and Lord Krishna fought together in the Kurukshetra war and killed Karna in Dwapara Yuga.

Thus, the inseparable Krishna and Arjuna were successful in finishing off a mighty demon like Sahasrakavacha. Let us always remember that every reason behind Lord's incarnation is unique and most importantly for the welfare of the mankind.





Significance of RATHASAPTHAMI

- Prof. Padmanabha Rao

Magha Shukla Saptami, is celebrated as Rathasapthami from ancient days in our land of Vedic culture. Lord Surya worship is as ancient as human life on the earth. Our sacred texts proclaim Surya-Sun God as 'Karma Sakshee Divakarah', Surya is an eye witness to whatever we humans do, since his rays enter everywhere. He is also termed 'Surya Narayana', since Lord Mahavishnu has bestowed special powers on him, without whose presence we would not have seen the light of a day!

The Vedas praise lord Surya deva as Savitur, in Soura Suktam of Rigveda. 'Udutyam jatavedasam devam vahanti ketavah' says the Suktam dedicated to Sun god. He is also called 'Sooryaaya Vishva chakshase' (the eye of the Universe). Worshipping Sun as deity is a common practice since ancient days in our country. Even a farmer in a village home or a worker,

**Rathasapthami on
28-01-2023**

unaware of any particular prayer, looks at the raising Sun and does namaskaram with folded hands, as soon as he looks at the Sun rising in the east.

Sapthami, the 7th day of every telugu month, is very significant to Surya deva. He is the lord of planets- *grahanam jyotiradityah duritakshaya karakah*, - Sun gives his luminosity to other planets and also wards off their evil effects on humans, according to shastras.

Magha Sukla Saptami is the day where the Sun god is worshipped as the main deity. Each year, we get, 2 days in a month, and hence 24 Saptami days, of which Magha Shukla Saptami is a very auspicious day. On this day, the Sun changes his path towards North.

On this Rathasapthami day, early in the morning people take bath in sacred rivers, wells, ponds and pilgrim centres keeping Arka leaves on both shoulders signifying the Sun as protector. This day is named 'Rathasapthami'. Women prepare special Payasam of broken wheat / rice, jaggery with ghee and offer it to the Sun God in an earthen pot and offer red flowers to him. This is considered auspicious and pleasing to Sun god.

'Arogyam bhaskarad icchet' - one has to pray to the Sun God for good health shastras say. Lord Sri Ramachandra, an incarnation of Lord Vishnu was initiated by Agastya rishi to recite 'Aditya Hrudayam' in Ramayana, when he found Ravana, very powerful to defeat and kill. Aditya Hridayam is a very powerful stothram which is to be recited every day to ward off all evil effects of planets in bad dashas for blessing us with good health and prosperity. 'Aaditya Hrudayam Punyam

sarva shatru vinashakam, jayavaham japennityam.
Aditya Hrudaya Stotram is very powerful which gives us victory, good health and prosperity, longevity and much more, says the Stotram. Lord Surya is remembered as 'Namaskarapriyah' one who is easily pleased by offering Surya Namaskaras to Him.

*Surya grahana tulya sa Shukla mahasya
Sapthamee I*

Arunodaya velayam snanam tatra mahaphalam II

Says Bhavishya Puranam. This means 'Magha Shukla Sapthami' is equal to the day of Solar eclipse - a Parvakalam, very auspicious occasion to offer our prayers to Sun god. One has to have bath before Sun rise, and offer Arghyam to Lord Suryanarayana.

Let us sincerely pray with utmost devotion to Suryadeva, on this particular day and seek His blessings.



RATHASAPTHAMI IN TIRUMALA

Rathasapthami, popularly known as 'Surya Jayanthi' will be observed this year in Tirumala on 28.01.2023. On this holy day, Lord Malayappaswami takes ride on seven celestial vahanams and hence it is also called "One day Brahmotsavam".

On Rathasapthami day, One day Brahmotsavam begins with Suryaprabha Vahanam and concludes with Chandraprabha Vahanam. It is a rare glimpse for the devotees to witness all the seven vahanams on a single day in Tirumala on this auspicious occasion.

List of Vahanams being taken on Rathasapthami Day in Tirumala

Surya Prabha Vahanam
Chinna Sesha Vahanam
Garuda Vahanam
Hanumad Vahanam
Chakrasnanam
Kalpavruksha Vahanam
Sarvabhupala Vahanam
Chandra Prabha Vahanam

Devotees can have a glimpse of all these seven vahanams on this day and be blessed.

Rathasapthami festival will also be held in almost all the local TTD temples in a grand manner.



It is not in the hands of man to decide his destiny as his own birth and death are not in his hands. His beginning and end are governed by divine intervention. As far as man is concerned, he has no say in these matters. It's a chance happening ordained by his fate. Man cannot choose his family/society. He is simply born into it. But in the middle man asserts himself so much as his ego takes control and makes him think that he is in charge of his life and destiny. Vemana captures this strange predicament of man in the following poem. Isn't it foolish, he asks, to think that he can decide his destiny in the middle, when the beginning and end are not decided by him? Vemana subtly implies that it is 'maya' that grips man as he lives his life in the world.

Janana maranamulaku sari swatantrudu gadu
Modala kartha gadu thudanu gadu
Naduma kartha nanuta nagubatu kaadako
Vishwadabhirama vinura Vema!

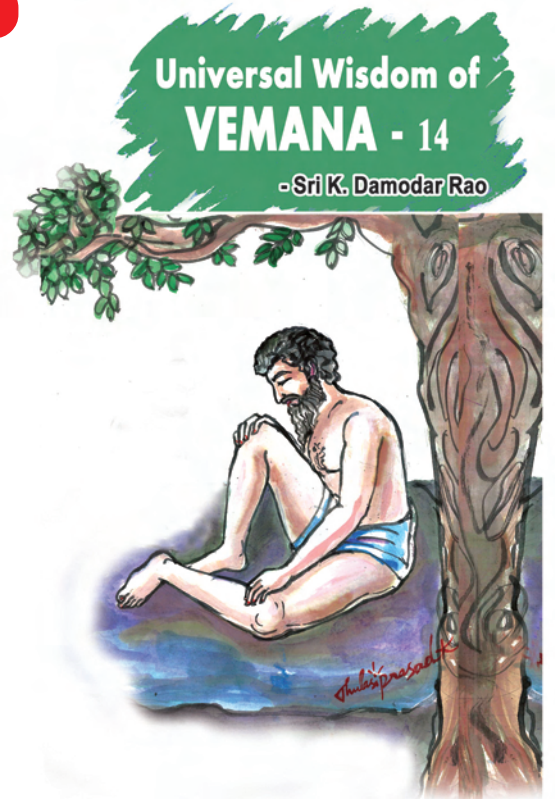
(Poem 187. Page 28. *Vemana Padyalu* Part I. C.P. Brown Collection, 1839. Ed. Bandi Gopala Reddy {Bangore} TTD, Tirupathi 1992.)

In translation:

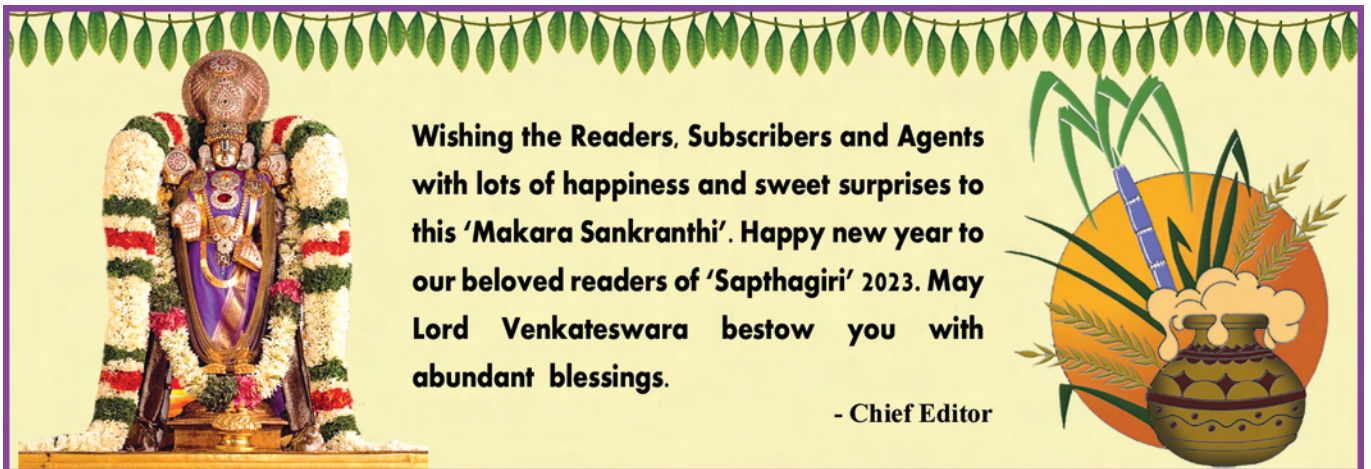
He is not free to choose his birth or death
Not in control in the beginning nor at the end
Isn't it odd to claim he holds charge in the middle!?
Listen Vema, the one endeared to the Creator!

In his characteristic ironic tone, Vemana pokes fun at the greatest folly of man: he thinks he governs his life. He willingly suspends his faith and lets his ego take an upper hand. Hence, he thinks of his self, his family, promoting his riches and interests. Greed enters his mind and shapes his psyche and personality in this phase. He craves for fame and popularity as though these are everlasting assets that he could boast of. Vemana implies that during this middle period he is governed by illusion. He forgets where and how he came into this world and what would happen at the end.

A wise man who remembers his beginnings, one who does not let his ego take over his mind, creatively utilises the limited time



he has in the world. He spends his days and years in the service of mankind as a token of his devotion to the God. He does not sever his bonds with his family nor does he forget his duty. The beginning and end dare in harmony with the middle. The wise man who realises the meaning of his existence leads a contented life, balancing his dedication to family and commitment to humanity. This divinity within emanates as a halo of awareness and enlightenment.



Wishing the Readers, Subscribers and Agents with lots of happiness and sweet surprises to this 'Makara Sankranti'. Happy new year to our beloved readers of 'Sapthagiri' 2023. May Lord Venkateswara bestow you with abundant blessings.

- Chief Editor

Winter, *shishir ritu*, is in full swing. In north India, it is the coldest month of the year. In the south, the nights are steadily becoming cooler even if days are warm or even hot, especially towards afternoon. Early morning mist is common in many places, sometimes dense enough to reduce visibility. It is *Pausha* (Pushya masam in Telugu), the tenth month of the Hindu calendar and the Indian national calendar, equivalent to December-January partly overlapping with *dhanurmasa*, the ninth month of the lunar calendar.

The month is generally considered unfavourable for marriages and other auspicious events; on the other hand the focus is on worship. In many places in south India, (during *dhanurmasa*) at dawn one hears the voices of small groups of people reciting Tiruppavai as they walk through the streets with house fronts beautifully decorated with complex kolams. Hot pongal – rice cooked with moong dal (pesaru pappu), with ghee and flavoured with pepper and jeera is what is made at home and given as prasadam in the temples. On special days, Sakkarai pongal – pongal with jaggery is made.



Pausha month has several important days. In fact, one of the most important days for Sri Vaishnavites usually falls in this month. As is well known, for all Vaishnavites, ekadasi is important, being sacred to Lord Vishnu. People fast and offer worship to the Lord. Pausha month has Saphala Ekadasi and Putrada Ekadasi. Putrada ekadasi is considered especially important for those desiring sons. It also coincides with Vaikunta Ekadasi, also known as 'Mokshada Ekadasi' and 'Mukkoti Ekadasi'. On Vaikunta Ekadasi, the paramapada vasal, also known as the swarga dwaram vaikunta dwaram or the entrance symbolizing the door to heaven is opened. In various temples where there is such a gateway, the Lord is taken in procession through it followed by thousands of devotees. Ten days before and ten days after Vaikunta Ekadasi are devoted to reciting from the Divya Prabhandham. Saphala ekadasi occurs during Krishna paksha or the dark phase of the moon. Meaning successful, it is believed that those who observe this ekadasi faithfully will see their work bear fruit.

Simhachalam

At Sri Varaha Lakshmi Narasimha Swamyvari Temple in Simhachalam (Visakhapatnam, A.P.), on Bahula Amavasya day, Theppotsavam (Float festival) is celebrated. *Jagadaananda Kaarakaa - Jaya - Jaanaki Praana Naayakaa* reverberates on the bahula panchami day this month when the



annual Tyagaraja Aradhana is held not just in 'Tiruvaiyaru' but also in many other places in India and abroad and Tyagaraja's pancharatna keertanas are sung. This is to commemorate the day the great saint and composer achieved Samadhi.

During Pausha month, in addition to Sriman Narayana, we also worship Surya Bhagavan, the Sun god. Some of the dietary suggestions for this month are the use of jaggery, ginger, cloves, sesame etc. that give warmth to the body and also provide immunity from chills. This month also sees the festival of Makara Sankranti. This is the day when Surya Bhagavan transits into the Makara rashi or zodiac Capricorn and the sun starts moving northward. This is the Uttarayana punya kalam. It is a huge pan-India social festival and celebrated in other countries also.

Pausha Purnima

As the month progresses, people look to the end of the cold winter days. It is believed that bathing in the Triveni Sangam on 'Pausha purnima' will assure salvation. Pausha purnima is also celebrated as 'Shakambari purnima', celebrating the Goddess Shakambari, who ensures our food security. It falls on January 6, 2023 this year. It is actually the culmination of Shakambari navaratri or Banshankari navaratri. Goddess Shakambari, an aspect of Shakti is mentioned in the Devi Mahatmyam. She is the bearer of greens and is believed to have come forth after a huge drought bringing in her body-fruits, flowers and vegetables to satiate the hunger of the people.

Let us pray to Surya Bhagavan to keep us warm and be gentle on us with his rays as the days go by. Let us also pray to Shakhambari devi thanking her for her bounty and requesting her to keep our farms and fields green and fill our plates with enriching food for the days to come.

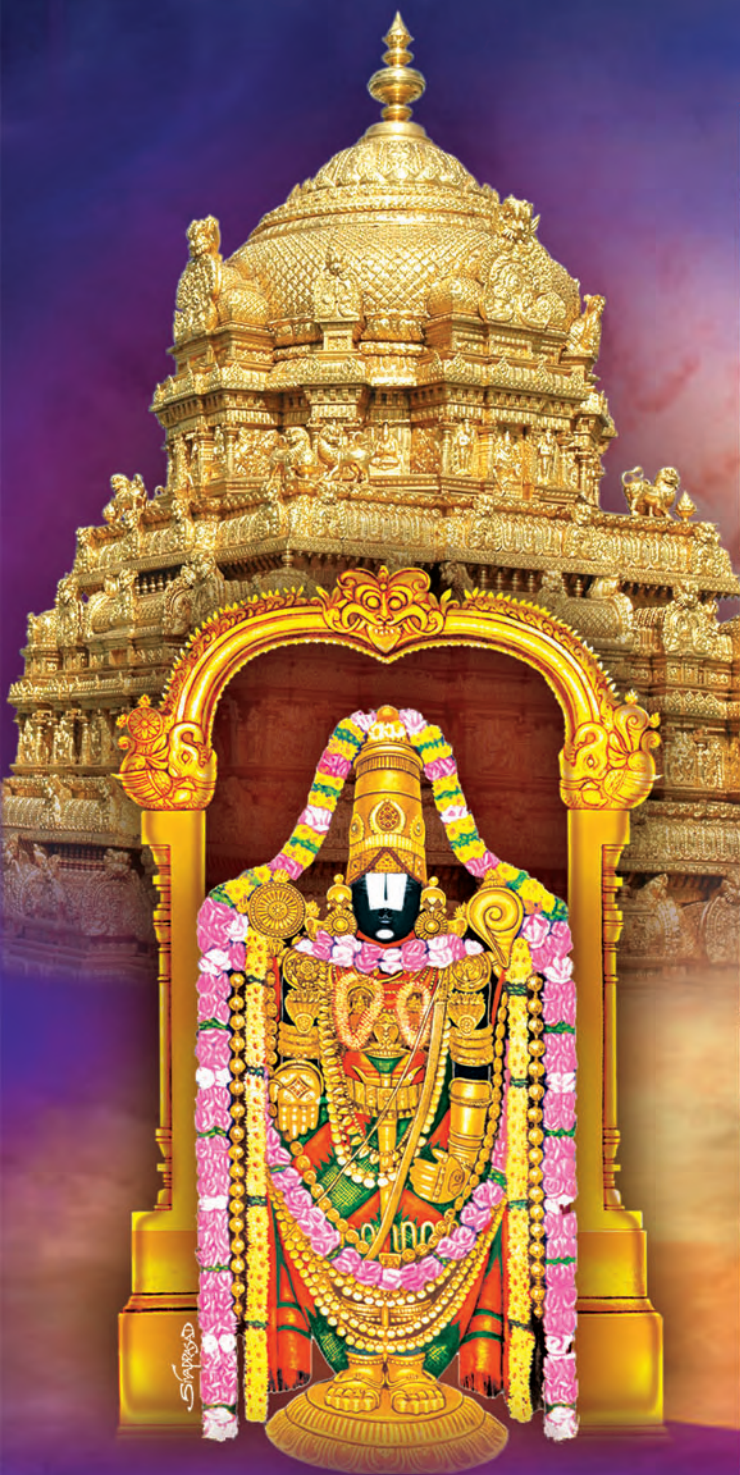


PARUVETA UTSAVAM in Tirumala



The processional deities of Lord Sri Malayappa Swamy and Lord Sri Krishna Swamy, seated on separate palanquins, are taken for a pleasure hunt to Paruveta Mandapam in Tirumala from the main shrine in a colourful procession on 'Kanuma' day. On this auspicious day, Lord Malayappa Swamy wears Conch, Disc, Mace, Bow and Arrow, accompanied by Lord Sri Krishna Swamy, enthralled the devotees, who have gathered to witness the event. The temple priests and officials on behalf of Lord Malayappaswami and Lord Krishna Swamy throw the weapons at replica of wild animals in the green woods of Seschachala ranges and mock hunt will be executed in this celestial hunt festival. After the customary rituals, the deities were taken back to the main temple.





TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS

JANUARY 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

FEBRUARY 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28				

MARCH 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
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26	27	28	29	30	31	

JANUARY 2023

- 01 New Year Day
- 02 Vaikunta Ekadasi
- 03 Sri Swami Pushkarini theertha Mukkoti
- 07-13 Sri Andal Neeraattotsavam
- 11 Sri Thyagarajaswami Aaradhana
- 14 Bhogi
- 15 Makara Sankranthi
- 16 Kanuma, Sri Godadevi Parinayotsavam
- 21 Sri Purandaradasa Aradhanotsavam
- 22-30 Devuni Kadapa Sri Lakshmi Venkateswaraswamivari Brahmotsavams
- 26 Vasanthapanchami, Republic Day
- 28 Rathasapthami, Bhishma Ashtami

FEBRUARY 2023

- 01 Bhishma Ekadasi
- 05 Sri Ramakrishna theertha Mukkoti
- 11-19 Srinivasa Mangapuram Sri Kalyana Venkateswaraswamivari Brahmotsavams
- 11-20 Tirupati Sri Kapileswaraswamivari Brahmotsavams
- 18 Mahasivarathri
- 28 to Mar 08 Tarigonda Sri Lakshminarasimha Swamivari Brahmotsavams

MARCH 2023

- 03-07 Tirumala Srivari Float Festival
- 07 Sri Lakshmi Jayanti, Sri Kumaradharatheertha Mukkoti
- 18 Sri Annamacharya Vardanthi
- 20-28 Tirupati Sri Kodandaramaswamivari Brahmotsavams
- 22 Sri Sobhakruth Samavathsara... Ugadi
- 24 Matsya Jayanti
- 27 to Apr. 04 Vayalpadu Sri Pattabhiramaswamivari Brahmotsavams
- 30 Sriramanavami
- 31 to Apr. 08 Vontimitta Sri Kodandaramaswamivari Brahmotsavams

TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS

APRIL 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
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30						

MAY 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
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JUNE 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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11	12	13	14	15	16	17
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APRIL 2023

- 03-05 Tirumala Srivari Vasanhotsavam
- 06 Tumbura Theertha Mukkoti
- 14 Tamil New year Day,
Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Jayanti
- 22 Sri Parasurama Jayanti,
Ganga river Pushkaram
- 23 Akshaya Thruthiya
- 25 Sri Ramanuja Jayanti,
Sri Sankara Jayanti
- 26 Sri Rama Jayanti
- 29 to May 01 Tirumala
Sri Padmavathi Srinivasa
Parinaya Mahotsavam

MAY 2023

- 01 May day
- 02-05 Tiruchanur Sri Padmavati Ammavari Vasanhotsavam
- 04-12 Nagulapuram Sri Vedanarayanawamivari Brahmotsavam
- 04 Sri Nrusimha Jayanti, Mathrusri Tarigonda Vengamamba Jayanti
- 05 Sri Kurma Jayanti
- 06 Sri Annamacharya Jayanthi
- 13-21 Karvetinagaram Sri Venugopalaraswamivari Brahmotsavams
- 14 Sri Hanuma Jayanti
- 16 Tirupati Gangajathara
- 26 to June 03 Tirupati Sri Govindarajaswamivari Brahmotsavams
- 30 to June 03 Tiruchanur Sri Padmavati Ammavari Float Festival
- 31 to June 08 Hrushikesh / Narayanavanam
Sri Kalyana Venkateswaraswamivari Brahmotsavams
Appalayagunta Sri Prasanna Venkateswaraswamivari
Brahmotsavams

JUNE 2023

- 02-04 Tirumala Srivari
Jyeshtabhishekam
- 04 Yeruvakapunnami
- 17 Savithri Vratam
- 20 Poori Jagannada
Radhayathra
- 24-26 Srinivasamangapuram
Sri Kalyana
Venkateswaraswamivari
Sakshatkaravaibhavam
- 29 Tholi Ekadasi

TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS

JULY 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

AUGUST 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
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SEPTEMBER 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
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JULY 2023

- 03 Gurupurnima
- 05 Tirupati Sri Vikhanasacharyulavari Sathumora
- 17 Tirumala Srivari Anivara Asthanam
- 07-09 Tiruchanur Sri Sundarajaswamivari Avatarotsavams
- 30 Tirumala Narayanagiri Chathrasthapana, Thulasi Mahathyam

AUGUST 2023

- 09 Aadikruthika
- 15 Independence Day
- 20 Nagachaturdhi
- 21 Garudapanchami, Mangalagowri Vratham
- 25 Sri Varalakshmi Vratham, Mathrusri Tarigonda Vengamamba Vardanthi
- 26-29 Tirumala Srivari Pavithrotsavams
- 30 Sravana Poornima, Sri Vikhanasa Mahamuni Jayanti
- 31 Sri Hayagreeva Jayanti, Gayathrijapam

SEPTEMBER 2023

- 06 Srikrishnashtami
- 07 Gokulashtami
- 14 Polala Amavasya
- 17 Sri Balarama Jayanti, Sri Varaha Jayanti
- 18-26 Tirumala Sri Venkateswara Swamivari Brahmothsavams
- 26 Sri Vamana Jayanti
- 18 Vinayaka Chavithi
- 22 Tirumala Srivari Garudaseva
- 26-29 Tiruchanur Sri Padmavathi Ammavari Pavithrotsavam
- 30 Mahalaya Pakshalu

TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS

OCTOBER 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

NOVEMBER 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

DECEMBER 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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24	25	26	27	28	29	30
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OCTOBER 2023

- 02 Mahatma Gandhi Jayanti
- 14 Mahalaya Amavasya
- 15-23 Tirumala Sri Venkateswara Swamivari Navarathri Brahmotsavams
- 15-23 Tiruchanur Sri Padmavati Ammavari Navaratri Utsavams
- 19 Tirumala Srivari Garudaseva
- 20 Saraswati Pooja
- 22 Durgashtami
- 23 Vijayadasami
- 31 Atla Tadde

NOVEMBER 2023

- 10-18 Tiruchanur Sri Padmavati Ammavari Brahmotsavams
- 12 Narakachaturdasi, Deepavali Amavasya
- 13 Kedaragowrivratham
- 14 Tiruchanur Sri Padmavathi Ammavari Gajavahanaseva, Children's day
- 17 Nagulachavithi
- 18 Panchami Theertham
- 19 Tirumala Srivari Pushpayagam, Tiruchanur Sri Padmavathi Ammavari Pushpayagam
- 24 Kaisika Dwadasi, Sri Chakratheertha Mukkoti
- 26 Karthika Pournami

DECEMBER 2023

- 10 Sri Dhanvantari Jayanti
- 12 Adhyayanotsavam begins in Tirumala
- 17 Dhanurmasam Starts
- 23 Vaikunta Ekadasi Sri Gita Jayanti
- 24 Sri Swami Pushkarini theertha Mukkoti
- 26 Sri Datta Jayanti
- 28 Pranaya Kalaha Mahotsavam in Tirumala

There are very few temples of Goddess Saraswathi Devi. Basara Sri Gnana Saraswathi Devi temple is one of the ancient historical temples in India. Basara is situated in Nirmal District of Telangana State and is 35 kms away from Nizamabad town.

As per sthalapurana, in olden days Sri Vyasa Maharshi lived in this place, hence the place called 'Vasara'. Later, Vasara became 'Basara' due to the influence of Marathi Language.

LEGEND

There is an interesting Stthalapurana about the temple and Goddess. Accordingly, Vyasa Maharshi installed Goddess Gnana Saraswathi Devi in Basara from the sand on the banks of Godavari.

In the olden days, Kumara (Lord Subrahmanya) Swami, came to Bhooloka and took rest for some time on a mountain in this region. Hence the mountain named as 'Kumarachala Parvata'. After the Mahabharata war, Vyasa maharshi came to the south and reached the Kumarachala Parvatha and spent some time there doing penance in a mountain cave. One day while

doing penance, Jaganmata appeared to Vyasa Maharshi and asked : "Bring three handfuls of sand from River Godavari and pour it on the earth and perform puja for that sand". According to the Jaganmata's words, sage Vyasa took three handfuls of sand from the Godavari and poured it on the earth. Immediately the sand became three holy idols. The three idols are Sri Saraswati Devi, Sri Lakshmi Devi and Sri Mahankali. Goddess Saraswati is also known as 'Kumarachalavasini' because the goddess is enshrined on 'Kumarachala Parvatha' (Mountain).

According to another legend, after the end of the Mahabharata war in the Dwapara Yuga, Vyasa maharshi reached South India and reached the present Basara region after travelling to different places. Looking at this glorious area, sage Vyasa wanted to stay here for some time and set up an

BASARA Sri Gnana Saraswathi Devi

Dr. I.L.N. Chandra Sekhara Rao

JANUARY 2023

SAPTHAGIRI

31

ashram. He used to bathe in Godavari river every day and bring sand with three handfuls and perform puja. Meanwhile, one day he bathed in Godavari river as usual and brought three handfuls of sand and made three idols. Those three idols are Sri Saraswati Devi, Sri Lakshmi Devi and Sri Mahankali Ammavarlu. Sthala Purana reveals that sage Vyasa worshipped these three idols.

HISTORY

As per historical records, the temple was first built in the 8th and 9th centuries by the Rashtrakuta king. The temple was destroyed due to the attacks of the Muslim rulers in 13th century A.D. After that, Sri Vidyaranyaswamy rebuilt the temple in 14th Century A.D. Makkaji Patel, the local leader played a major role in the construction and development of the temple. During the Godavari Pushkarams in the year 2013 the temple was renovated.



A view of Sri Gnana Saraswathi Devi, Basara

The Godavari River is located one kilometre away from the Gnana Saraswati Temple in Basara. On the banks of the river Godavari there is a temple for Lord Siva. In this temple Lord Siva is being worshipped as 'Sri Suryeswara Swamy' in Lingarupa. There are idols of Mother Godavari and Vedavati near Shivalayam. There is a temple of Sri Vedavyasa on the main road near the road leading to Sri Gnana Saraswati temple premises.

Temple

In Basara, Sri Gnana Saraswathi ammavari temple was built in a large area. On the North and the West sides there are Gopuradwaras to enter the main temple. It is a three storied gopuram on the north and a five storied gopuram on the west. The main temple consists of Mahamandapam, Mukhamandapam and Garbalayam. Utsavamurti of the Goddess appears in Mukha Mandapam. In Garbhalaya we can see the Goddess of Sri Gnana Saraswathi Devi Ammavaru holding veena in two hands we can also see Lotus flower in one hand and akshamala in the other. In addition to main deity Sri Saraswathi devi we can also see Sri Lakshmi Devi on the right side. On the northern side of the temple premises, we can see various gods on the platform under the neem and peepul trees. In the temple premises there are temples for Sri Dattatreya Swamy and Sri Mahankali ammavaru. There is Vyasa guha (cave) on the hill near the temple. It is said that sage Vyasa did penance in this cave.

'Aksharaabhyasam' (It is an age old practice in which a child is given initiation of education in the temple or in a sacred place or done in front of a priest etc.) is the first step to acquiring knowledge. It is believed that doing such Aksharaabhyasam in the temple in Basara temple will be fruitful. Hence, Hundreds of parents perform Aksharaabhyasam of their children every day in the temple.

In this temple, daily sevas like Suprabhatam, Sahasranamaarchana, Ekanthaseva are being performed. There are weekly and monthly rituals

performed in the temple. Annual Brahmotsavams are celebrated in the month of Ashvayuja Masam for nine days during Dasara in a grand style. Special pujas are performed on the occasion of Sripanchami, to Sri Saraswathi Devi in Maghamasam.

Route

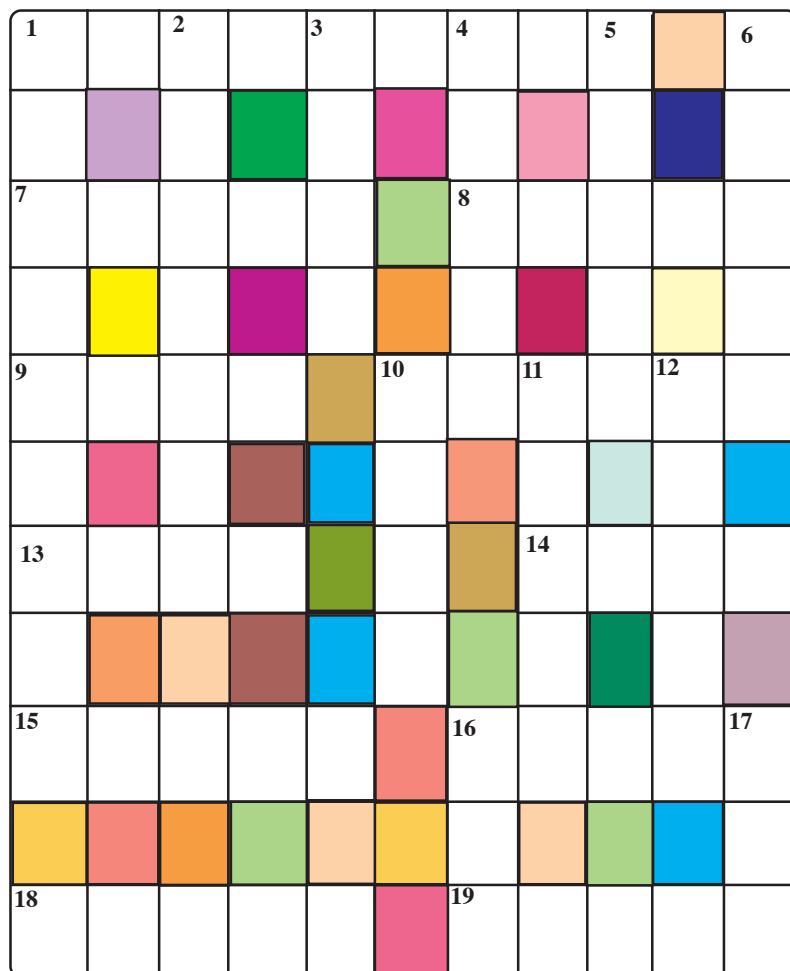
In Basara accommodation facilities are available for the devotees in temple cottages and private cottages. Basara is located at a distance of

145 kms from Adilabad and 35 kms from Nizamabad on the Hyderabad-Manmad railway line and has train facilities from Secunderabad, Nanded, Nizamabad and Kamareddy. There are bus facilities from places like Hyderabad, Nizamabad, Bhainsa, Nirmal.

*Sharadindu samaakaare parabrahma swaroopini
Vyasaraapeetha nilaya saraswathi namostute!!*



PUZZLE



Presented by
Sri T.S. Jagan Mohan

- DOWN**
01. Son of Jatayu (9)
 02. Daughter of Surabhi (7)
 03. Lakshmi (4)
 04. Wife of Huru (5)
 05. Sachi's Husband (5)
 06. Brahma (5)
 10. Chandra (4)
 11. King of Lanka (5)
 12. Sani (Jumbled) (5)
 16. Purpose (3)
 17. Have a meal (3)

CLUES FOR PUZZLE

- ACROSS**
01. Makara Sankramanam (9)
 07. Ragam - - - - Pallavi (5)
 08. Famous (Jumbled) (5)
 09. In the Middle (4)
 10. Divine Dog (6)
 13. Dry, Lacking Water (4)
 14. Use Less (Jumbled) (4)
 15. Vali (5)
 16. Below in Place (Jumbled) (5)
 18. Sugreeva (5)
 19. Burstout Suddenly (5)

Dasa sahitya, a perfect blend of sahitya, sangeeta and tatvajnana, makes it nonpareil. Dasa sahitya took the medium of music and used sahitya in spreading tatvajnana. Its musical element makes it pleasant to the ears. The sahitya fills the heart with bhakti and the tatvajnana enlightens our mind. The eminence of Dasa sahitya lies in the fact that it amasses ordinary people. The major aspect of Dasa sahitya is the tatvajnana, which is the knowledge we should attain to know the Supreme Lord Vishnu. Knowledge should never rest like a stagnant water, rather it should ooze out of every generation. But when the medium of knowledge was in a language (Sanskrit) which became very difficult for lay people other than scholars to understand, there emerged Dasa sahitya helping the flow of knowledge among people. It has brought to us that knowledge of the versatile Lord through which the eternal salvation or moksha is attained. The richness of tatvajnana that Dasa sahitya holds is extraordinary. There were many 'Hari dasas' who

have contributed to 'Dasa sahitya'. The word 'Dasa' itself means the one who has surrendered himself to the Supreme Lord. Such a person was 'Sri Purandaradasa'.

Purandara dasa's contribution to Dasa sahitya is phenomenal. In this world it is a custom of the students to praise the Guru. But in the case of Sri Purandaradasa, it was his guru, a great man, a profound scholar Sri Vyasaraajateertha who praised him in one of his compositions. Sri Vyasaraaja teertha says – “*Dasarendare Purandaradasarayya*”. There is a popular saying in Kannada which says “He who is a real haridasa should have sung Sri Purandaradasa's devarnama atleast once in his lifetime.” His compositions hold a variety of modules. His compositions infuse bhakti in the minds of people who not only sing but also hear them. The greatness of the Lord, his consort Lakshmi devi, Vayu deva etc... are predominantly found in his compositions. In addition to it, are the vairagya padas, the devarnamas which shows us the Dharma, acharana etc. Madhwa siddhanta also constitutes a major portion. Though the medium of



language of his compositions is Kannada, he is well-known in all Southern states of India. His contribution to the Dasa sahitya is such that it is sung by everyone irrespective of caste or religion. It is a mountain of approx. 4,75,000 compositions that he has bestowed upon us which deems impossible for a common human being. He made it possible because he was none other than the incarnation of "Narada rishi", who has pleased God through Nadopasana. Sri Vijayadasa, in one of his compositions narrating the life history of Purandaradasa, quotes the fact that he was the incarnation of Narada rishi.

"Dwaraka puradalli Sri Ramana sabheyolege.....
Veerarava ghorendu pogalala nabhadinda Naradaru dharegilidaru."

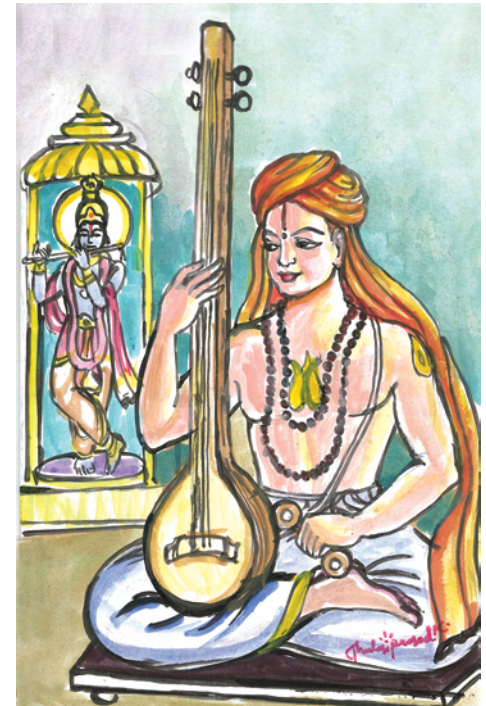
Such a great man incarnated as the son of a wealthy person Varadappa nayaka. His place of birth was Purandaragada. His birth name was 'Srinivasa Nayaka'. At a very young age he had a great knowledge in Kannada. He had also learnt business and skills which was needed to take care of his father's business. His interest in music made him learn sashtriya sangeeta too. At an age of 18 he was married to Saraswati bai who was a daughter of a wealthy merchant. Then on, he took care of his father's business and attained success. Thus, he was called Navakoti Narayana. In due course, he had 4 sons and a daughter. In spite of everything he had in his life, he was parsimonious. Though he did not hate God, he was bereft of bhakti. Added to this was his penny-pinching nature. Contradicting this was the nature of his wife Smt. Saraswati bai. Often, she tried to guide him with dharmopadesha but in vain. A particular incident at that point of his life was the turning point.

Lord as a Poor Brahmin

The Lord himself got down to rescue his bhakta. He came in the form of a poor brahmin begging for alms to conduct his son's upanayana. Navakoti Narayana couldn't refuse him on the face, so he asked him to come the next day. And when the poor Brahmin arrived the next day again the same thing repeated and that 'tomorrow' never came. At last frustrated by the repeated arrival of poor brahmin Navakoti Narayana gave him one fourth of a penny. His stinginess reached its peak. Now the Lord disguised as a poor Brahmin decided to invoke vairagya in him. So, he went and approached his wife Saraswati bai and asked for alms. As she expressed her dependency on her husband, the Lord asked her to donate the nose ring, as it belonged to her maternal home. Unable to refuse the poor Brahmin who has come begging for a good cause, she lent him the ring. Acquiring the ring the Brahmin

went to Navakoti Narayana in order to sell it. Navakoti Narayana was astonished seeing the ring which resembled his wife's nose ring. His mind was filled with doubt. He immediately secured the ring carefully in a box and placed it in a cupboard. He rushed home and questioned his wife on the missing nose ring. Unable to answer him she decided to leave her soul by drinking poison. In a moment the ring appeared in the bowl. When she handed it back to him, he was startled. He was at his wits end when he checked for the secured ring and found it missing at his shop. When enquired, his wife explained everything. That was a changing moment for him where he realized that the one who had come begging was none other than the Lord.

Grieving his mistakes, he sat with a strong determination that he



would not even consume a drop of water until he again sees the Lord. His wife Saraswati bai tried to convince him, but in vain. Then after 3 days of fasting the Lord reappeared in front of his wife. “His sins are now washed away by this fasting, but still he has not detached himself completely from materialistic things. Let him sacrifice everything then I myself will come.” said the Lord. On hearing about the words of the Lord from his wife, Navakoti Narayana foreswore his business, wealth, house and everything he had. He placed a tulasidala (Basil leaf) on his house and said krishnarpana. Accompanied by his wife and sons, he walked out of the house with absolutely nothing. His heart and mind were filled with bhakti.

On the way he saw an old Brahmin. This time he identified the Lord and submitted himself immediately at the Lord’s feet. At that moment, the Lord disappeared. That night again the Lord appeared in his dream and advised him to acquire mantropadesha from a Guru. The next morning he woke up and decided to reach Sri Vyasaraja teertha, a great tapasvi, a profound scholar, a prominent figure in Madhwa parampara. That day after the pooja, Sri Vyasaraja teertha and Srinivasa nayaka met in person. Srinivasa nayaka procured Guru upadesha from Sri Vyasaraja teertha and was advised by him to dedicate all his kritis to PURANDARA VITTALA. From then on, his birth name diminished and he became popular by the name 'Sri Purandara Dasa'.

Whenever Purandara Dasa closed his eyes it was Lord Krishna who filled his heart and mind and with that came his first kriti— *“Krishna Moorthy kanna munde nintidantide.”* Then he sang the kruti *“Hendati santati savira vagali dandige chitta hidisidalayya”* recognizing Saraswati bai was also a reason behind his transformation in his life. Then came the kruti *“Adedella olite aitu”* expressing his gratitude to the Lord. Thus began the devout journey of Sri Purandara Dasa.

He was worshipped by kings and common people alike. The ruler of the Deccan, Sri Krishnadevaraya was moved by Sri Purandara dasa’s life. He once called Purandara dasa to his palace and they had a long conversation that led to a devaranama *“nimma bhagya doddado namma bhagya doddado”*. He recognized the amount of vairagya that Sri Purandara dasa possessed and awarded him with a lot of wealth as a gift. The next day the King heard the news that Purandara dasa gave up all the wealth to an old man. This increased Krishnadevaraya’s devotion towards Purandara dasa.

Just like his works to Dasa sahitya, his contribution to the field of Carnatic Music is insurmountable. Popularly known as ‘sangeeta pitamaha’, he accorded the foundational lessons of Carnatic music like sarali varisai in the raga mayamalavagowla. He played a pivotal role in showing us the right path to learn the art form. The trinities of Carnatic music namely Tyagaraja, Muttuswami Deekshitar and Syamashastri have all given utmost respect to Sri Purandara dasa and his works. Tyagaraja has expressed his devotion towards Purandara dasa in the beginning of his work, ‘prahlada bhakti vijayamu’ in the form of a kandapadyamu. He and his works were placed at such a esteemed pedestal by a lot of vageyeyakaras (one who composes and sings the keerthanas).

His compositions bring the essence of sarva moola granthas (treatises of Sri Madhwacharya) which were recognized by Sri Vyasaraja teertha who called them ‘Purandaropanishat’. They formed an ocean making it impossible for anyone else to achieve. Such a mahamahimopadyaya has composed songs till the end of his life. His life exhibits vairagya and his songs evokes bhakti. Though he has attained the Hari pada, he will live in his songs for centuries and centuries to come.





Serial

Part - 20

Tirumalai Ozhugu

History of Rituals and Customs in Tirumala

Original in Tamil by- Sri K. Balasundar Nayakar
Excerpts Translated into English by- Dr. M. Varadarajan

(Continued from the previous issue)

With a view to hearing Alvars' hymns during Adhyayanotsavam by Tiruvenkatamudayan, Manavala Mamunigal gave in writing a proclamation to Periya Koil Kelvi Tiruvenkata Ramanuja Jeeyar, one among the Ashtadiggajas of Manavala Mamuni as follows:

Where is the proclamation? There is an *Itihya* that Sri Ramanuja ordered to hear *Iyarpa* etc., Divya Prabandhams during Tiruvadhyayana Utsavam by Tiruvenkatamudayan in Tirumala.

Alwar Tiruvarangapperumal Areyar's visit to Tirumala : Alwar Tiruvarangapperumal Areyar is the descendent of Sriman Nathamunigal, otherwise called Periya Mudalaiyar; He is an Acharya for Sri Ramanuja in instructing Tiruvoymozhi; He recites Mudal Alvars (Poygai Alwar, Bhoothathalwar, Peyalwar) *Srisukthis* in *Devagana*, to please Tiruvenkatamudayan; He is the Chieftain of 700 Thambirans (Areyars); Such a great Acharya, in

the month of Karthikai, after worshipping Periya Perumal in Srirangam on *Tirukkarthikai* Divya Mahotsavam Day, reached Sri Ramanuja Mutt. He desired to visit Tiruvenkatam, which was sung by Alvars. He also permitted him to go to Tirumala. On the way, he worshipped Lord Devaraja at Kancheepuram. He reached the foot of the Hill, where he worshipped Lord Govindaraja, who is very much liked by Sri Ramanuja. Then, he worshipped *Adippulialwar* and nearby Alvars like Parankusar, Parakalan and others. He ascended the Hill. On the way leading to hill, he worshipped Narasimha (Kattu Azhagiyasingar). He stayed for a while at *kalveli*.

Having heard the arrival of Areyar, Periya Tirumalai Nambi and Tirumala Ananthan came down in the halfway and they exchanged traditional courtesies to each other. Along with them, Areyar prostrated before Periya Vasal (Mahadwara Gopuram in Tirumala, called *Avavaraichchuzhnthan Tiruvasal*)

and in *pradakshina* he reached the Holy Swami Pushkarini and took a ceremonial bath and decorated his body with twelve marks of the Lord's feet. Then, he worshipped Gnanapiran (Varaha swami) as sung by Nammalwar and reached *Periya Vasal*; prostrated there; entered the temple and prostrated before *Balipeeta*; worshipped Nachchiyar in *Tirumadappali* (kitchen service area), then went round and worshipped Venkataththari (Nrisimha sannidhi); entered Vendri Malai Ittan Mandapam (Garuda Mandapam/Krishna Mandapam) and worshipped Tiruvenkatamudayan from a distance, standing like a fully decorated elephant wearing a variety of jewels. Happily thrilled by the sight of Srinidhi (Srinivasa) by reciting the verse 31 from Stotraratnam of (His Acharya) Yamunacharya. Before the Sloka ended, Tiruvenkatamudayan called him through Archaka and said, "I easily got a Mahatma, which I said in Krishnavatara as "*Sa Mahatma Sudurlabha*". Tiruvenkatamudayan through Archaka felicitated Areyar and asked him to prostrate at His feet. Then Areyar with so much of enthusiasm went into *Sanctum sanctorum* (*Garbhagruha*), through Sri *Kulasekharappadi* and prayed to Him by reciting "*Alarmel Mangai Urai Marbha Un Adikkeezh vandhu pugunthene*" in the presence of Periya Pirattiyar. Areyar worshipped His feet, thighs, navel, chest, hands, shoulders and head. Then Archaka honoured him by placing Satakopa on Areyar's head, after giving *Theertham*, *Parivattam*, etc. He said that He is the Acharya for Sri Ramanuja as he taught Tiruvoymozhi. Hence, Tiruvenkatamudayan very much liked Areyar. Further, like Sage Vyasa, Parasara Rishi and others who praised Him, Tiruvenkatamudayan commanded that Areyar should sing the hymns from Mudal Alwars' Prabandhams, in His praise.

Accordingly, Areyar was extremely pleased to hear the command of Tiruvenkatamudayan and sang the first and last two hymns of each Prabandham of Mudal Alwars in *Devagana*, besides Irandam Tiruvandadhi hymn 28, as sung by Muktas in *Samagana*. Again Tiruvenkatamudayan through Archaka honoured Areyar. Having seen all these, Ananthalwan requested Areyar that from next day onwards Thiru Adhyayana Utsavam is due to begin and he should sing in *Devagana*, Alwars' hymns to

be heard by Tiruvenkatamudayan. Areyar also agreed to stay in Tirumala and accepted this as the order of Tiruvenkatamudayan Himself. He began to sing Tiruppallandu in *Devagana* on the first day and at the last day after the Utsavam, he returned to Srirangam.

In Srirangam, Areyar met Sri Ramanuja and related what all happened at Tirumala and said that Tiruvenkatamudayan's grace showered on him was really boundless and beyond description in words, and he expressed that "All this I owe to you". Sri Ramanuja felt exhilarated to hear what Acharya Areyar told him. He thought over the hymns of Poygai Alwar in Mudal Tiruvandadhi verses 26,37, 99, Bhoothathalwar's Irandam Tiruvandadhi verses 25, 33, 53 and 75. Likewise Peyalwar's Mundram Tiruvandadhi verses 9, 69, and 70, besides Tirumangai Alwar's Periya Tirumozhi 2-8-2. For this reason that Tiruvenkatamudayan asked Alwar Tiruvarangapperumal Areyar to sing the hymns of Mudal Alwars.

Sri Ramanuja's proclamation : Immediately, Sri Ramanuja chose an Areyar born in the lineage of Sriman Nathamunigal and named him Malai Kuniya Nindrar Areyar and asked him to go to Tirumala, stay there and recite daily Alwars' Divya Prabandha in *Devagana* at the Sannidhi. Since Tiruvenkatamudayan liked Mudal Alwars' hymns, every year, during Adhyaya Utsavam and other festivals when all the 4000 hymns are recited, they begin the hymns of Mudal Alwars which extol Tiruvenkatamudayan. The recitation of *Iyarpa* completely at first and then on the next day, as in Srirangam recite other hymns starting with *Tiruppallandu*. After completion of *Tiruvoymozhi* in *Irappattu*, Madhurakavi Alwar's prabandham called *Kanninum Chiruttambu*, which speaks *Charama purushartam*, is to be recited as this is so dear to Tirumala Ananthalwan. Since, he fulfilled the desire of Nammalwar in the hymn 3-3-1 of Tiruvoymozhi, he should render all *kainkaryams* at all times to Tiruvenkatamudayan. Ananthalwan was strict in *Charama parva*, which earned him the title Madhurakavi Dasa. In such a way, Sri Ramanuja sent a written command to Tirumala Ananthalwan through Malai Kuniya Nindra Areyar to Tirumala.

(to be continued)

ANNAMAYYA'S VIGNETTES OF WISDOM

- Prof. M. Rajagopalachary

Sankirtana:

SamabuddhE yindariki sarvavEdasAramu...

samabuddhE yindariki sarvavEdasAramu
samuDindariki hari sAdhanamO yayyA

clmaku danajanmamu cEri sukhamai tOcu
dOmaku danajanmamu doDDasukhamu
AmaniyIlgaku sukha mAjanmamai tOcu
yEmiTA nekkuvasukha mevvari kEdayyA

janturAsulaku nella jananamu lokkaTE
antaTAnu maraNamu laviyokkaTE
centa nAhAranidralu sthrlsukhA lokkaTE
intaTA nindukanTE nevvarEmi gaTTirayyA

indulOna nevvarainAnEmi srlvEnkaTapati
nandamugA dalacina dadi sukhamu
yendu jUcina nItaDindarilO nantarAtma
candamugA nevvariki svatantra mEdayyA

samabuddhi = sarvabhUtamulanu samamugA jUcu
cUpu; an impartial attitude, considering all things
alike, of equable temperament; Amani = samRuddhi,
vasanta Rutuvu, phalasamRuddhi; alarm, spring,
harvest time, plenty, abundance; svatantramu =
sontamu, paratantramu kAni, parAdhInamu kAni,
svEccha; free will, uncontrolled, head-strong,
despotic, independence, freedom; kaTTiri =
bandhinciri, dharinciri, kUDabeTTiri; gathered;
saved; acquired; ceased, to tie, bind, wore, to store
up, to lay by;

Translation:

Equal Treatment

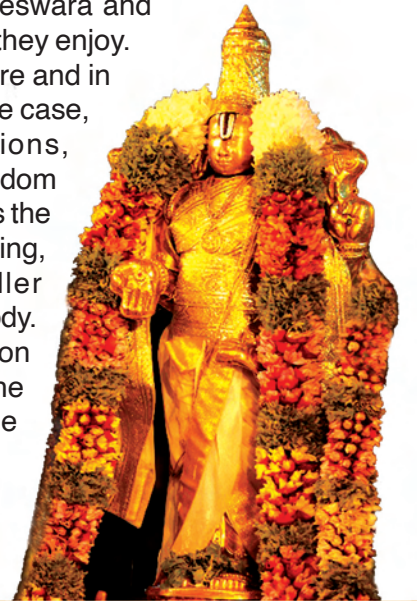
Vedas, in essence, preach equal treatment of all.
Hari is in all equally, an example to follow, O men!

An ant delights in its birth;
So do a mosquito and a fly.
Can you single out
Whose delight is better?

Birth and death,
Food, sleep
Are common to all the animals.
What more does anyone gather in this world?

Actual delight for anyone lies in
Chanting the name of Lord Venkateswara!
He is everywhere and in everybody.
Where is the real freedom, then, for anybody?

Commentary : In this *sankirtana*, Annamayya preaches equality of vision and treatment. He considers it to be the essence of the Vedas. Similarly, the Lord has set an example for us by being in all beings equally. The *Gita* says that the wise do not discriminate between the high and the low, and regard equally a Brahmin scholar, cow, elephant, dog and the *candala* who eats the flesh of a dog: “*VidyAvinayasampannE brahmaNE gavi hastini! shunicaiva svapAkE ca panditA ssamadarshinah!!*” (*Gita* 5-18). He who has this egalitarian vision alone is considered a distinguished saint. Though human beings and other animals are all equal as far as food, sleep and fear are concerned, man is distinguished by his power of discrimination. Annamayya drives home the truth that the real delight lies in chanting the name of Lord Venkateswara and not in the food, sleep they enjoy. The Lord is everywhere and in everybody. If this is the case, Annamayya questions, where is the real freedom for anybody? It implies the Lord, and not the being, who is the indweller operates from everybody. So, there is no question of finding fault with the being for the acts he does.





'Mahabharata' is the greatest epic in the world. There are many powerful characters that teaches us many morals day to day life to follow. There are strong women characters who had lived successfully in that yuga. One among unsung is "Hidimbi". Though she was a demon, she had many good qualities showcased after she met the Pandavas. The character entry is in Adi Parva of Mahabharata.

"Alas! We have somehow escaped from the horror house of lac". Thus, saying the tired Pandavas with their mother unknowingly entered Kamyaka forest which is full of mysteries. "Oh mother, let's take some rest in this beautiful forest for some time". Bhima replied, you all can take rest, I shall guard". By saying, the remaining four brothers and mother Kunti laid on the green meadows of the forest. Meantime, Bhima was gazing at the beauty of the forest. He did not know that two others were also watching them from a tall Sala tree.

"Get ready for the feast my dear sister Hidimbi" laughed Hidimba who was the demon king of that forest. He continued "my beloved sister, please go and get all of them, so that our entire village can have a sumptuous meal today". Hidimbi, started to walk towards Bhima. Nearing him, she got attracted towards Bhima, seeing his strength. Hidimbi thought herself "this man should be certainly a prince, so let me disguise and enquire him". Thus, saying, she took a beautiful form and approached Bhima. "Oh, valorous one, who are you and why did you come here with others to this dense forest?" Bhima did not reply initially. He was surprised to see a woman alone in this forest. But Hidimbi continued by telling the truth, "Oh virtuous man, looking at your plight, I would like to save you from my demon brother Hidimba who had sent me to kill you all for his food, so please go away from this place". Bhima replied, "How could a dutiful son abandon his mother and brothers?". Hidimbi continued, "I got attracted to you and wanted to marry you, so, I had revealed the truth about my brother who is wicked". Bhima "Let him come, I will kill him". Thus, saying Bhima roared.

Hidimba could guess what was happening. So, he called for fight with Bhima. Huge fight started between Hidimba and Bhima. Finally, Bhima killed Hidimba. Bhima became king of that forest. Hidimbi approached mother Kunti and requested "Oh revered mother, I have

fallen in affection with your son Bhima who is like a lion in the forest, kindly approve my request.” Kunti responded “Oh beautiful girl, we are Kshatriyas and you are a Rakshasa, the marriage may not be fully accepted in the society, but I could see you as a Dharmic (righteous) and straight forward girl, hence I accept your request on one condition”. Hidimbi asked “Please let me know the condition mother”. Kunti replied “At any time, I will not be able to take you to the kingdom or make your child a king. Moreover, we must go back to the kingdom, so cannot stay here for a long time. If you accept, then let this happen.” Hidimbi accepted for this. Kunti also accepted and the marriage of Bhima and Hidimbi held in the forest.

Months passed and Hidimbi delivered a boy. As he was born from Rakshasa woman, he grew fast and was strong. They named him Ghatotkacha. Hidimbi was very much happy to see her son but had to leave Bhima as per the condition. Ghatotkacha promised Bhima that he would appear when he thinks of him at any time. Hidimbi thanked Pandavas and mother Kunti. Hidimbi told “Oh mother, I am so grateful to you as you have accepted as your daughter-in-law. I would make Ghatotkacha learn all the warfare, and marital arts so that it would be useful in future”. Mother Kunti replied “I am very happy to have such a dutiful daughter in law, though you are born as a Rakshasa, you have all the righteous qualities adhered and I am sure, you would bring up Ghatotkacha who will make us proud one day”. Thus, saying the Pandavas with mother Kunti left the forest.

During Kurukshetra war, there was a fear that the Pandavas might lose war. Lord Krishna instructed Bhima to bring Ghatotkacha. When Ghatotkacha came into the war field, he made

maximum destruction. He was finally killed by Karna’s most powerful weapon given by Indra which was kept to kill Arjuna but had to use against Ghatotkacha as he almost made the Kauravas run out of the war field. Even, when dying, he killed most of the opponents by crushing them taking huge form. He was trained by Hidimbi to always respect, obey elders and stand righteous. Death of Ghatotkacha was a huge loss to the Pandavas. But it was also victory as he destroyed the opponents.

Hidimbi, though not spoken a lot in the Mahabharata, was considered high. Hidimbi raised her son with all the skills that would help the Pandavas. She preached righteousness and bravery to her son. She was a classic example of a person who proved that, one can be transformed to good though the birth was demonic in nature. There is no doubt, that she is an applaudable character in Mahabharata.



Festivals and Rituals in February 2023

01	Bhishma Ekadasi
05	Sri Ramakrishna theertha Mukkoti
11-19	Srinivasa Mangapuram Sri Kalyana Venkateswaraswamivari Brahmotsavams
11-20	Tirupati Sri Kapileswaraswamivari Brahmotsavams
18	Mahasivarathri
28 to Mar 08	Tarigonda Sri Lakshminarasimha Swamivari Brahmotsavams



Celestial TIRUPPAVAI

- Sri N.Rajagopalan

An incarnation of Bhu Devi, Sri Andal was found by Vishnuchitta, (Perialwar), under a tulusi bush of the flower garden in Vatapatrasaayi temple in Srivilliputtur. From early on, Andal developed an intense love for Sri Krishna by listening to the 'Bhagavatham' stories narrated by her father. Fancying herself as the spouse of God, she used to bedeck herself with flower garlands strung by her father for the Lord. One day, Vishnuchittar discovered this. Upset by it, he discarded the garlands worn by her, and strung and took fresh garlands to

the temple. But Sri Vatapatrasaayi made known to him through the priest that He only wanted the garlands worn by Andal, and bade him to bring garlands first worn by her. Andal thus became the 'Choodi- kodutta-Nachiar'. Perialwar knew that Andal was destined to be the bride of the Lord. In a happy ending of the legend, Sri Ranganatha went to Srivilliputtur, and wedded Andal with all religious rites and grandeur, and remained in Srivilliputtur as Lord Sri Ranganannar, presiding in 'arca' form, along with Andal and Garuda. Andal as the Consort of Lord Sri Ranganatha, thus enjoys a status even superior to Perialwar. Her unique greatness derives from the fact, that while all other Alwars had earlier been, in a varying degree of torpor, before the Lord aroused them by granting them 'mathinalam' or spiritual enlightenment. Andal who was naturally endowed, aroused the Divine Lord to remind Him of the esoteric doctrine of 'paratantra', (soul's dependence on the Divine). Her 'Tiruppavai' of thirty verses, is a verbal necklace of gems strung together, a celestial poem laying out this Upanisadic doctrine, predicating the three-fold bond of being the servant only of the Lord 'ananyarhasasatvam', seeking solely His refuge, 'ananyasaranyatvam' and being an exclusive object of His enjoyment, 'ananyabhogyatvam'. Hence, it is that Tiruppavai has been called 'Vedamanaittukkum Vittu' or 'the seed of the Vedas and Vedanta.

The term 'Tiruppavai' has several meanings. But here, the term means the "Sri Vratam", a religious rite that confers prosperity, 'Priyam', and more, spiritual bliss, 'Sreyam' in consecrated service to, and eternal union with the Divine Lord Sri Krishna. The motivation for this rite draws from the Bhagavatha story in which the unmarried girls of Vraja observed a strict penance during the month of 'margasirsa' and prayed to goddess Katyayini to bless them with Nandagopa's son as their husband. Andal being a small girl from Srivilliputtur, mimics the symbolisms and relives the Bhagavatha history in Srivilliputtur imagining herself and her friends as 'gopika' girls of Vraj bhoomi.

Pasurams in a glance

The first five songs are a preamble to the poem. In the first verse, She sings the praises of the season and time for performance of the rite, viz. early dawn, and addresses her bejewelled sisters to join her for a bath, bath in the sense of eternal union with Sri Krishna. Andal assures them that Krishna will grant them the 'parai' as reward for their prayerful rite, which literally means a musical drum such as was used by cowherds in their culture, but herein, symbolises the privilege of rendering personal service to the divine Lord. This term 'parai' reverberates in numerous verses throughout the song, especially at the end when they all get to meet Krishna in person. In the second verse, Andal sets out the rules of the rite, austerities to follow, and practise charity and avoidance of

calumny. The third verse enumerates the benefits that would accrue by the observance of the rite. In the fourth, Andal invokes the rain god to drink deep of the ocean and drench the world with abundant showers. The symbolism here is for spiritual preceptors to fill the earth with divine grace. The fifth verse holds out the assurance that if the Lord is worshipped by all faculties, mind, word, and body, our age-old sins will get burnt like cotton in the fire. In the next ten verses, the girls participating in the rite are sought to be awakened so that they may congregate at a common trysting place 'pavaikkalam', for proceeding to Krishna's residence. The imagery of the manner of awakening each girl, alternately coaxing, cajoling, castigating, is charming, but through it all, holds out the promise of fulfilment, viz. 'Bhagavad-samslesham'.

The gopikas then assemble and proceed to seek first the permission of the guard and the gate-keeper of Krishna's mansion to enter. This verse envisages the need to approach the Divine Lord through the sentinels of God's kingdom. That we

should seek recourse to a preceptor in the form of 'Acharya', is intrinsic to our spiritual tradition. Having gained entrance to Krishna's mansion, the gopikas pray to awaken Nandagopa,



On the occasion of
Dhanurmasam

Yashoda, and Balarama. Krishna is sought to be awakened next, but not evoking response from him, they realise that they should have sought the intercession of Nila Devi as divine mediatrix, 'Purusakara'. The gopikas pray to her to come and open the door for them with her lotus hand jingling with beautiful bangles. Nila Devi assures and invites them in, to join her, to take them to Krishna. The gopikas then make their prayerful submission to Krishna that while they know that He is the Supreme Brahman, they have come to Him not as such but as the son of Nandagopa. Like vanquished kings seeking the grace of the victor with humility to render service unto him, they pray for His glance so that their 'karma' may vanish. They then entreat Him to rise and walk out of his chamber like a lion, and be seated on his majestic throne to listen to their submission. When Krishna complies and starts walking, their hearts melt, and they chant benediction to Him. Krishna is pleased and queries, 'Tell me what is this rite and what are the things you want for this rite'. The 'gopikas' then list out the materials they want for the ritual, citing the precedent set by their elders, as adherents of the 'Sampradaya'. Krishna grants all the things that they list, like his conch, disk, flag post, etc but produces before them the musical drum of the 'yadava' community on hearing them mention 'parai'. The bevy of girls throw a puzzled look at him, and protest saying that this 'parai' is not what they had meant. Addressing their dear Krishna as 'Govinda', in three clinching verses, they underline first His unfailing winning quality over adversaries, but next remind him teasingly, both we and You having taken birth in the community that makes a living of tending cows, 'what we, who are full of flaws, want from You who are impeccably perfect, is an inseparable kinship with You, for all time and through successive births, and that we be rendering service to You only', "*Undhannodu Utromeyaavom Unakke Naam Aatcheyvom*". They pray that they might be pardoned for their ignorance in calling their Krishna by smaller names like 'Narayana', 'Padmanabha' etc. instead of 'Govinda' which is most dear to Him. In the concluding verse, Andal invokes for all who render the thirty verses of her song in the right order, abiding grace in every place and time, of 'Thirumal' of lustrous face and crimson eyes, Who made such prodigious exertion to churn the ocean to beget the dame-nectar - Mahalakshmi, and thus become 'Thirumal'.



(Continued from the previous issue)

The Adhyayanotsavam

From epigraphs we learn that in Tirumala this festival commences ten days prior to the Mukkoti Ekadasi and continues for a period of about 20 days. During this festival the Utsavamurthis are taken out in a procession to the chanting of the Nalayira Prabandham or the hymns of the Srivaishnava Alvars, composed for the benefit of the people not well versed in Sanskrit. The festival was divided into two parts, the earlier 10 days being known as 'Pahalpattu' and the later 10 days as 'Irapattu,' which commenced with the Vaikunta Ekadasi or Mukkoti Ekadasi. During the adhyayanotsavam also the devotees provide for naivedyam to the Lord as during the Brahmotsavam.

The adhyayanotsavam was celebrated for Sri Govindaraja temple and Sri Kodandarama temple in Tirupati also. For five alvars they were observed for a period of 12 days and on the Sattumurai day special offerings were arranged to be made to Lord Venkateswara first and were then brought down to Tirupati for being offered to Alvars.

The earliest reference to this festival occurs about 1400 A.D. and the latest by 1635 A.D.

In olden days one adhyayanotsavam was also performed in front of Sri Ramanuja for twelve days in the month of Chittirai. The Kalyana Mantapam was utilised for this purpose for housing the Utsavamurthi. The Utsavamurthi Malayappan is to this day kept in the Kalyana Mantapam during the Brahmotsava and Adhyayanotsavam periods.

Pavitrotsavam

Many of the annual festivals of the Tirumala temple, for which endowments were made in the past as found in the epigraphs are being continued until this day. But in the case of Pavitrotsavam also for which many references are found in ancient inscriptions, the festival was conspicuous by its absence till 1962 when it was revived. The reason for its discontinuance and why it was given up are not known.

As its very name temples, this is essentially a purificatory ceremony. It is an annual festival. Its object is the expiation of the sins of commission and omission done in the daily worship and other religious rites performed in the temples.

This purificatory festival is conducted on Sravana Shuddha Dasami day. The festival lasts for four days. This festival was first instituted at Tirumala by Saluva Malliah deva Raja in 1463 A.D. during the time of Saluva Narasimha. (157-TT). This was a



THE TIRUMALA TEMPLE

- Dr. N. Ramesan

Part
XVIII

completely new festival introduced for the first time and hence full detailed information relating to the ceremony lasting for a period of five days (actually six days if we include the preliminaries of sowing the seeds on the night preceding) is available. The festival comprises also of the recitation of Vedas and the reading of the Puranas during these five days for which the persons employed were especially remunerated.

The festival being held and introduced for the first time in 1463, A.D., it may be of interest to find the details given in the epigraphs about this. An inscription is found on the north wall of the verandah in the first prakara of Tirumala Temple and the details are as follows:-

“May there be prosperity! On Wednesday combined with (the star) Rohini, being the 10th lunar day of the bright fortnight of the Makara month in the Subhanu year, current with the Saka year 1385, the Sthanattar of Tirumalai executed the following silasasanam in favour of Sriman Mahamandalesvara Medinimiarraganda Kattari-saluva Mallayadeva - Maharaja son of Saluva Errakampayadeva Maharaja, viz. and for the items of expenditure to be incurred in connection with the celebration of the Tirupavitrathirunal, in your name, for five days in the bright fortnight of the Avani month, so as to commence with the ankurarpanam sowing the nine kinds of seeds in small earthen pots on the night of the dasami (tenth lunar day), to decorate the Tirumamani-mantapam (the front mantapam adjoining the sanctum) on the Ekadasi day and then seat on the dvadasi day Malaikuniyaninra-Perumal and Nachchimar in the Tirumamani-mantapam, after putting on the pavitram (sanctified thread round the head, neck, waist etc.) and taking Him in procession through the streets, viz.,

103 panam for the somakumbham (water pot), pratimai (images) and yagnopavitam (sacred cord),

10 panam for the acharya's hasta matra and karna matra (ornaments for the hand and the ears),

12 panam for dakshina (gift of money), pasu (gift of a cow), kshetram (gift of land) and suvarnam (gift of gold),

40 panam for the panchasayanam (five articles of bedding) comprising the ratnakambali (carpet), mettai (bed), mayiliraku (peacock's feathers), krishnajinam (deer skin), and pattuchchelai (silk cloth),

5 panam for the Purana-bhattar and the Brahmans chanting the Vedas; 10 panam for the dakshina for the above individuals;

$3\frac{1}{4}$ panam for the nila-varnam (dye of the blue colour) for dying (and supplying) red, black and green thread making up the panchavarna-nul (thread of five colours);

$\frac{1}{2}$ panam for the yellow coloured thread;

7 panam for the kusavar (potters) for the supply for kumbhakuda (big pot), palikai and other earthen vessels; and

8 panam for the achari (smith) to furnish the parvatam (plank with the image of the deity painted on it) and makaratornam (ornamental arch-shaped wooden frame) with two crocodiles represented on it forming the doorway in the function;

The total coming to 198 $\frac{3}{4}$ panam”.....

A NEW SERIAL WILL APPEAR SOON.....

The monumental work, 'Sri Venkatachala Mahathyam' by Mathrusri Tarigonda Vengamamba is an epic in poetry epitomising the magnificence of Sri Venkatachala shrine. It has popularised the sacred story of Sri Venkateswara Swami in this material world. This epic in six cantos will be presented in the style of simple language for the convenience of readers in the form of English translation.

There are in all only four inscriptions two from Tirumala temple and two from Tirupati temple belonging to the 15th century which mention this festival. There are no other references to it at a later date. It is really inexplicable as to how and when such an important purificatory ceremony came to be discontinued in the annual festivals of the temples, the more so, as it is found that it has been performed with all zeal and grandeur in the other important Vaishnava temples like Kanchi, Srirangam etc.

This festival has been resuscitated in the temple in recent years from 1962 onwards and is now conducted for four days starting from Sravana Shuddha Dasami day.

Sankranti

The Sankranti festival corresponds to the movement of the sun in the heavens. Of these, the Makara Sankranti and Karkataka Sankranti corresponding to the Uttarayana and Dakshinayana Punyakalas are specially observed universally. Vishu Sankrantis corresponding to the vernal and autumnal equinoxes are less important. Still all these occasions together with amavasya days are considered to be very holy ones, and hence these have been observed in the temples also.

Many devotees have made endowments for special worship during these days. The first such endowment belongs to queen Samavai of 966 A.D. (18-TT) where she has made an endowment for worship on two ayana Sankrantis and the two vishu Sankrantis. Ever since this, during centuries endowments for special

worship by the devotees have been increasing on the Sankranti days. In one case, we have the full and the new moon days on which occur the Soma Surya grahanam which are called Vishesha divasamgal as distinct from tingal-divasamgal which regularly occur in a routine manner every month.

Our special interest would be the Adi-Ayana in the administrative arrangements of the temple since this formed the new accounting year of the temple when the old registers were discarded and new registers of accounts commenced to be written on. The Adi-Ayana is consequently mentioned in these epigraphs with reference to this function as in the expressions:

tiru andeluttu idum podu (66-GT)
tiruvandeluttu satti arulum podu (195 GT)
tiruvandeluttitta-taruvayile (58-G.T.)
 etc.

(to be continued)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE

1 S	A	2 N	K	3 R	A	4 N	T	5 I		6 D
A		A		A		A		N		A
7 T	A	N	A	M		8 N	O	D	E	T
H		D		A		D		R		H
9 A	M	I	D		10 S	A	R	A	12 M	A
G		N			A		A		A	
13 A	R	I	D		S		14 V	A	N	I
M					I		A		A	
15 I	N	D	R	I		16 U	N	R	D	17 E
						S				A
18 S	O	U	R	I		19 E	R	U	P	T

Bhartruhari in his Neetishataka describes the significance of knowledge. He asks the kings to treat the learned persons as equals. Wealth can be stolen. Gold can be stolen. Property can be forcibly taken away by hatching a conspiracy. But knowledge cannot be stolen under any circumstances. The following verse of king Bhartruhari explains the same.

*Harturyaati na gocharam kimapi
sham pushnaati yat sarvadaa
Hyarthibhyah*

*pratipaadyamaanamanisham
Praapnoti vruddhi paraam
Kalpaanteshwapi na prayaati
nidhanam*

*Vidyaakhyamantardhanam
Yeshaam taan prati maanamujjhata
nrupaah
Kastaih saha spardhate*

It means give up your vain pride oh kings!, before the learned and treat them fairly as your equals or even superiors; for who can ever compete with those whose hidden wealth of knowledge is beyond the reach of thieves to steal, always a source of indescribable happiness to them. It is a strange fact that by distribution, the wealth of knowledge never decreases. Whereas it increases more. It never is subjected to ruin not even during the end of kalpa i.e. on the day of universal destruction. Education is such a perennial treasure which cannot be destroyed. Enemies cannot take it. The main intention of this sloka is to propagate the significance of education. King is worshipped in his own kingdom.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF KNOWLEDGE

- Dr. K. Sudhakar Rao



Whereas a scholar will get respect where ever he goes. One should always try to receive good education which gives us the motivation to have a life of morality and human Values.

This sloka is a good message for the youth. Nowadays everyone is fighting with his brothers, relatives for the sake of property. In those days Kings had pride and sometimes they used to illtreat the scholars. This sloka is equally applicable to the modern society. Now kings are not there. So it is the responsibility of the parents / teachers / elders to see to it that each every person gets proper education. One should also know about the Vedas, Upanishads and Puranas which are considered as the treasures of ancient knowledge which leads ultimately to the path of Liberation.

Those who are having sufficient knowledge should try to disseminate the same among the people irrespective of the caste, language, etc. Because Bhartruhari clearly mentioned that by distribution, the wealth of knowledge will grow. It is quite clear that a country where scholars are considered as ideal persons, will prosper. There is no greater boon than education. There is no wealth greater than the knowledge. One should understand and assimilate this sloka. Such people will be blessed by God. Knowledge should be constructive. It cannot be destructive. Techniques and technology which is detrimental to the society should always be abandoned.



LET US LEARN SANSKRIT

LESSON - 21

Original Expression by : Mahamahopadyaya Kasi Krishnacharya

Modified Expression by : Mahamahopadyaya Samudrala Lakshmanaiah

English by : Dr. S. Vaishnavi

युष्माकम् = Yours

यथा = as, like

अखादत् = ate

अस्माकम् = Ours

रे, अरे = hey

अखादः = you ate

तेषाम् = Their

वृथा = in vain

अखादम् = I ate

QUESTIONS

- a 1. युष्माकं गृहे अद्य वयम् अन्नम् अखादम्। 2. अस्माकम् अत्र गृहमेव नास्ति। 3. सः यथा अकथयत्, त्वम् अपि तथा अखादः। 4. यूयं तत्र वृथा किमर्थमास्त? 5. वयं तत्र वृथा न आस्म। 6. किन्तु तेषां गृहे स्नानं कुर्मः। 7. रे बालक! त्वं वृथा मा एधि। 8. युष्मद् गृहे पाकः कियत्पर्यन्तम् आसीत्? 9. शाकमकुर्वन्, अन्नं कुर्वन्ति। 10. ते शीघ्रम् अखादन्।

- b 1. Are they inside or outside? 2. How much time would they stay in our home? 3. We just had fruits. 4. They are not here for your sake. 5. What did you have this evening? 6. I prepared vegetables in their bowl. 7. Where were you till now? 8. I was in your home only know. 9. Is it so! Who are they? 10. They are those who took bath yesterday morning in your home.

ANSWERS

- a 1. We had food in your home today. 2. We don't have home here. 3. However he told, even you ate in the same manner. 4. Why were you there without any purpose? 5. We were not there without a purpose. 6. But we are taking bath in their home. 7. Hey boy! You don't come unnecessarily. 8. How much did you cook in your home? 9. They cooked vegetables, they are cooking rice. 10. They ate soon.
- b 1. ते अन्तः सन्ति वा, बहिः सन्ति वा? 2. ते अस्माकं गृहे कियत् पर्यन्तं स्ति? 3. वयम् इदानीमेव फलानि अखादाम। 4. युष्माकं कृते ते अन्नं न सन्ति। 5. त्वम् अद्य शाकांसे किम् अखादः? 6. अहं तेषां कल्पाय शाकम् अकथयाम। 7. एतावत् पर्यन्तं कर्म आसीत्? 8. युष्मद् गृहे एव अन्नम् खादन्। 9. त्वम् एव कथं रे अखादः? 10. ते के? 11. त्वम् एव अन्नम् खादन्। 12. त्वम् एव अन्नम् खादन्।

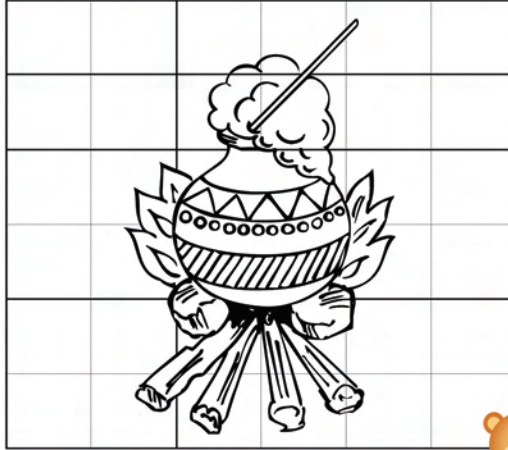


DO YOU KNOW?

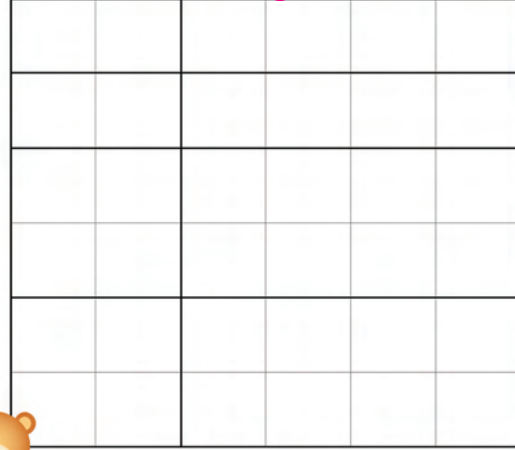


DRAWING

Colour the Picture



Draw the Picture as given



MATCH THE WORDS
In Column A with the Column B:

A

1. Sri Panchami
2. Rathasapthami
3. Basara
4. Sankranthi
5. Kanuma

B

- a. Lord Surya
- b. Telangana State
- c. Worship of cattle
- d. Goddess Saraswathi
- e. Harvest festival

Answers : (1) d (2) a (3) b (4) e (5) c

RIDDLE

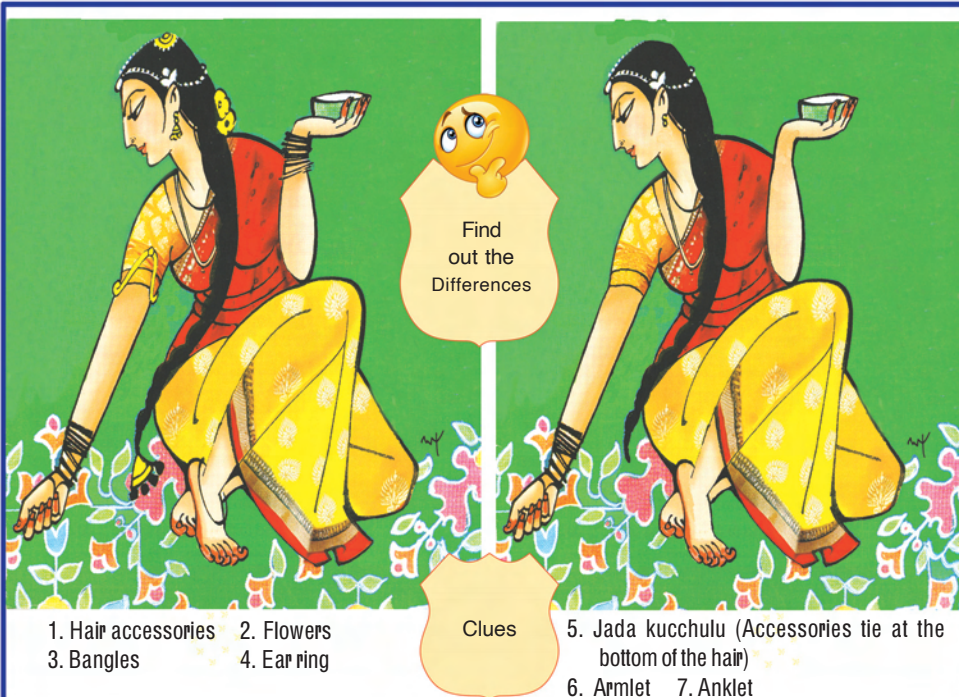
Guess the temple using the clues given below

1. This temple is located in Andhrapradesh
2. Temple dedicated to the Sun God.
3. It is considered one of the oldest sun temples in India.
4. Sunrays will touch the deity in this temple.

Answer : Arasavalli Sri Suryanarayana Swami temple

PROVERB

**MANY HANDS
MAKE LIGHT WORK**



1. Hair accessories
2. Flowers
3. Bangles
4. Ear ring

Clues

5. Jada kucchulu (Accessories tie at the bottom of the hair)
6. Armlet
7. Anklet

RECITE

Saraswati namasthubhyam
varade kaamarupini |
Vidyaarambham karishyaami
Sidhirbhavathu me sadaa ||



Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams
SPIRITUAL SAPTHAGIRI MAGAZINE

QUIZ for Children - 6

'Sapthagiri' introduced QUIZ for Children. Read the entire Magazine and find out the answers for the Quiz and fill in the blanks with the answers following the Rules and Regulations given below.

1. Name the program related to Dasa Sahithya Project
2. The last day of the four-day festival in Sankranthi is
3. Magha Shukla Saptami is celebrated as
4. Who advised Sri Rama to worship Sun God
5. Brother of Hidimbi
6. Father of Andal
7. Who gave Akshaya paatra (Imperishable vessel) to Dharmaraja
8. Name the temple mentioned in the Nara-Narayana article
9. Pushya masam (month) in English
10. Where is Basara temple located?
11. Name the twin demons slayed by Mahavishnu
12. Who got Samantakamani from Lord Surya
13. Rathasaptami falls on
14. Who is called 'Pratyaksha Narayana'
15. Where is Konark temple located
16. Name the perumal and Nayaki in the Thirukkannapuram temple
17. Mukkoti Ekadasi is also known as
18. Tiruppavai consists of how many Pasurams
19. Name the Surya temple located in Srikakulam district of Andhra Pradesh
20. Name the leaves used for bathing on Rathasaptami day

RULES AND REGULATIONS

1. This quiz is meant for the children aged below 15 years only.
2. The children who wish to participate must belong to Hindu religion only.
3. The parents of participating children must be the subscribers of 'Sapthagiri' magazine.
4. Answers for the quiz questions must be written in the prescribed place provided.
5. The photocopy of the answer scripts for quiz will also be considered with Subscription Number only.
6. There should be no marks of striking and corrections in the answers. Only use ball pointed pen. Avoid pencil, Sketch or Jel pen.
7. The last date for submitting the answers for the quiz is 25-01-2023.
8. Three winners will be selected through lucky dip among the participants who submit all the correct answers.
9. The names of the winners will be published in the next issue i.e. March 2023 magazine.
10. The children of the employees working in the office of the Chief Editor, T.T.D. are not eligible to participate in the quiz.
11. No information will be provided over phone regarding the quiz. Participants should send their details legibly.

Name of the Child :

Age : Subscription No. :

Full Address :

.....

.....

Cell No. :

**Your answers should be sent to the
Address given below:-**

The Chief Editor, Sapthagiri Magazine,
TTD Press Compound
K.T. Road, Tirupati – 517507
Tirupati District, Andhra Pradesh



GENERAL PREDICTIONS FOR THE MONTH OF JANUARY 2023

- Daivajna Chaturanana Rani Narasimha Murthy



Aries (Mesha) : Aggression will lead to a disgrace. Better to have patience and should have silent observations. Speech is not silver but silence is golden. Health of the old in the house is alarming. Still there is a possibility of getting unexpected property. Praying Lord Venkateswara or Iswara will ward off all the evils and help to have a better place of choice.



Taurus (Vrishabha) : Health is wealth. Conservation of energy is the highest priority. Money is a stream to come in but mental stress is to be minimised to the extent possible. Better to postpone new investments and speculative activities. Proposal to purchase a plot or a flat will fetch you. Careful hard work will fetch you a lot. Praying Lord Narayana with Goddess Lakshmi will turn the tables in favour.



Gemini (Mithuna) : Sportsmen will have to meet new challenges. New scripts will be there with all mixed sorts of results. But people will be in festive mood. Long journeys are expected. Better to avoid overseas tours. Mixed results will be there in the business houses. Students should follow the routine very carefully. Praying Goddess Shakti will improve the situations very favourably.



Cancer (Karkataka) : Care should be taken in certain areas which may be unpredictable particularly in dealing with the public. Women folk will involve in general functions and will have a good relief from the normal routine. Students will have a good time to plan and be successfully executed for the future. Praying Goddess Parvathi with Lord Siva will yield good fruits.



Leo (Simha) : Chances to go to abroad. Clear success is the key for them. Money is like a flow to come in for Business people. They will have an easy song to sing in the competition and success is their goal to reach effortlessly. Students are happy in their endeavours. Young lads and ladies are very busy in wedding lock in the second half of the month. Praying Lord Siva will have good results doubled or trebled.



Virgo (Kanya) : People need not try for recognition. Recognition will come on their way to embrace them. Green signals are cleared for the youth for wedding lock. Begetting a child in the near future will bring happiness in the house. But there will be a high alert in the families. Praying Lord Venkateswara with concentration will change the colours in a highest degree.



Libra (Tula) : Librans should seek comfort in balancing the situations for their favour. In certain specific areas speech is silver and silence is golden. Working spirit and routine should continue smoothly. Investing is not suitable. Normal routine is the better option to go comfortable. Students should work hard. Praying Lord Narayana or Lord Shiva will make a great difference.



Scorpio (Virshchika) : Viral fevers, cough etc. may be driven from the house very seriously. Of course there may be a good recovery in care of health grounds particularly. Children are happy. Students will have to face rough weather and should have a commitment for a good future. Steadily there will be a good improvement. One should not forget elders. Praying Lord Siva with Goddess Parvathi will make a great and unimaginable difference.



Sagittarius (Dhanu) : Targets are nearing to light very comfortably. Musicians and artists of different fields will become magicians to show or exhibit their talents with great ease. Sportsmen will have a good recognition for their talents. It is their time to dictate terms. They will look forward for a better change which is highly promising. Praying Lord Subrahmanya will shower excellent results.



Capricorn (Makara) : Trends are very easy to follow comfortably. There is a great future for the students. Though there is a discomfort in their routine, they will not care for it. Unexpected changes are not on the cards. Better to wait for a better time. Satisfaction is the best key for the time being. Praying goddess Lakshmi will bring a great change in life.



Aquarius (Kumbha) : Great pundits, poets, literary persons, experts of different areas will have a great honour. They will be involved in great celebrations. Recognition will come on the way for them to enjoy. Children are happy. Youth and young married couple will enjoy. New investments, speculations are not recommended. Praying Lord Vishnu or Lord Shiva will make a great difference in life.



Pisces (Meena) : Comforts are to be created from time to time. Planning for an investment to purchase a land or purchase a house is essential. Students should be very careful in the studies. Care should be taken. Health should be taken care of. Praying Lord Venkateswara or Iswara will have a drastic change in life.

Subham Subham Subham

JANUARY 2023

SAPTHAGIRI

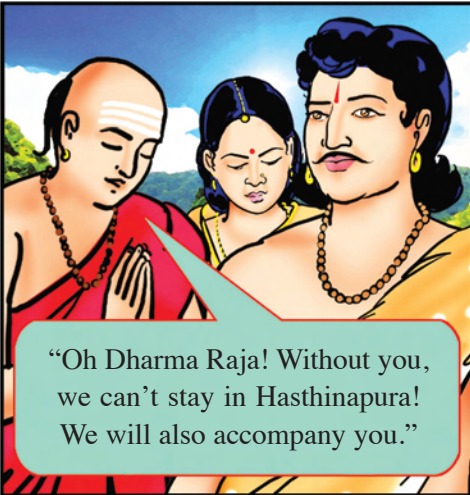
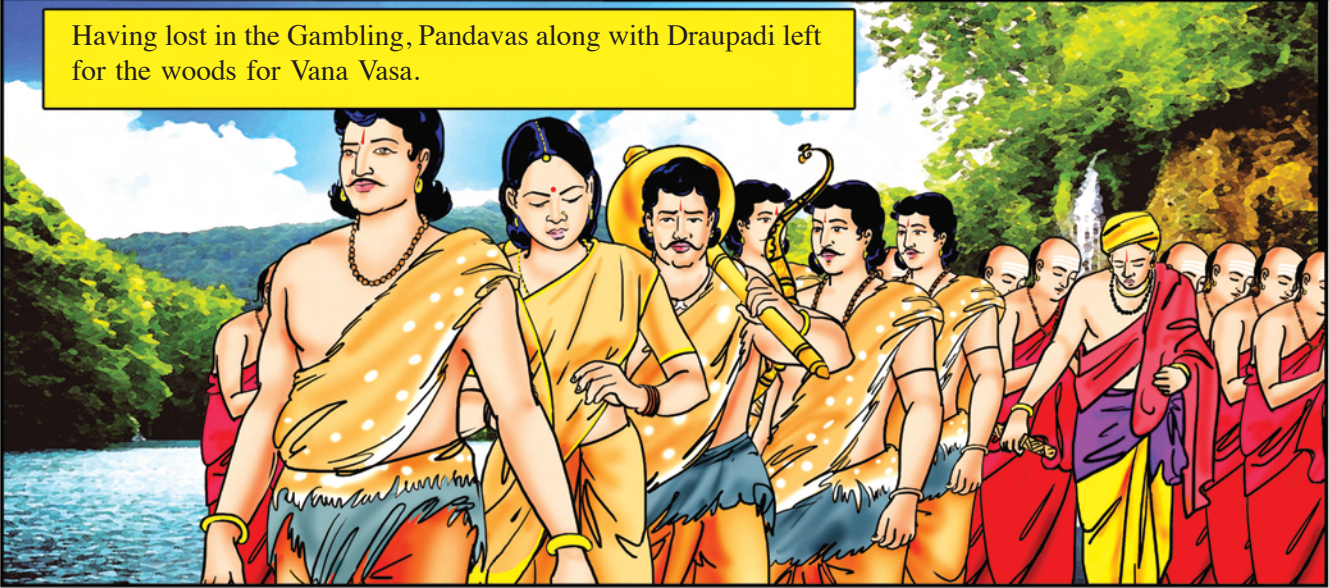
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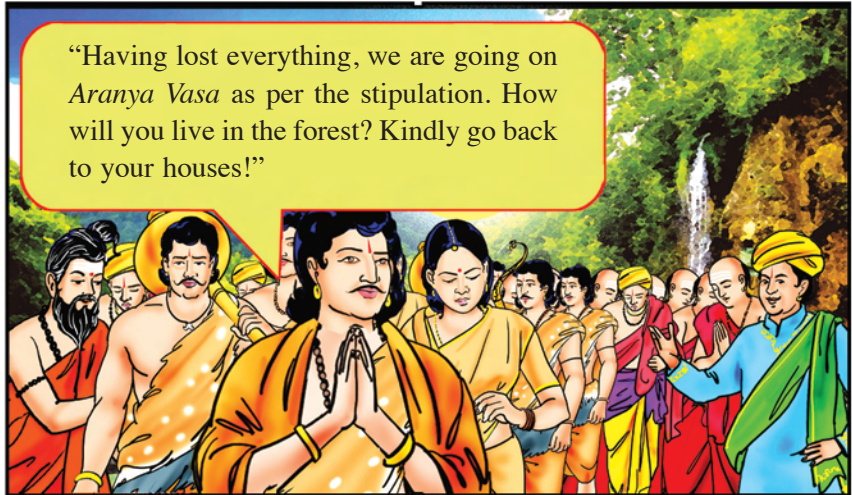
Salutation to **LORD SURYA**

Original Story in Telugu by :
Dr. Kampalle Ravichandran
Pictures by : **Sri Thumbali Sivaji**
Translated by : **Sri L.R.D. Murthy**

Having lost in the Gambling, Pandavas along with Draupadi left for the woods for Vana Vasa.



"Oh Dharma Raja! Without you, we can't stay in Hasthinapura! We will also accompany you."



"Having lost everything, we are going on Aranya Vasa as per the stipulation. How will you live in the forest? Kindly go back to your houses!"



"It is not fair to say 'No' when we want to go with you with great trust in you."



"Feed us whatever you eat!"

Dharmaraju asked his purohit Dhaumya

“Gurudeva! What is this crisis? I’m not in a position to welcome and feed the huge crowd who came along with affection even after our repeated denials!

How to get the food for so many people in this deep forest? Isn’t my life wasted if I can’t feed the hungry ones?”

“Don’t worry Dharmaraja! The Sun God (Surya Bhagavan) is the one who provides food to the entire living beings. You pray to him and get his blessings. That is how you can provide to these people.”

“Arunaaya! Sharanyaaya!
Karunaa Rasa Sindhave!
Asamaana Balaaya
Aartha Rakshakaaya
Namo Namah!”

“Vatsa! Dharma Nandana! This is Akshaya Paatra (an Imperishable Vessel). By praying to and humbly requesting it, you can get food for uncountable number of people.

I’m blessed, God!
I’m blessed.

END



TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS

SAPTHAGIRI

SPIRITUAL ILLUSTRATED MONTHLY

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OUR CONTACT ADDRESS

Chief Editor, Sapthagiri Office,
T.T.D. Press Compound, K.T. Road, Tirupati - 517 507.

Answers for the QUIZ

Published in the Month of
November 2022

- 20.11.2022 to 28.11.2022
- Pancharatra Agama
- 12
- Kasturi & Churnam
- Crocodile
- Panchami theertham
- Gaja
- Laksha Kumkumarchana
- Vanamalini and Balakini
- Brahma Muhurtham
- Kurattalwan and Andal
- Lakshmikasula Haram
- Sri Venkateswara
Ayurvedic Hospital
- Sri Ranganatha and
Goddess Ranganayaki
- Tirumala Nambi
- Women
- Sri Pallikondeshwara
Swami
- Kumbhakonam
- 29-11-2022
- Dharmavyadha and
Kaushika

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**CHANT
OM NAMO VENKATESAYA**

Printed by Sri P. Ramaraju, M.A., and Published by Dr. K. Radharamana, M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D. on behalf of Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams and Printed and Published at Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams Press, K.T. Road, Tirupati – 517 507. Editor : Dr.V.G. Chokkalingam, M.A., Ph.D.

JANUARY - 2023 :: SAPTHAGIRI

Honourable President of India, Smt Droupadi Murmu, offered prayers in the Hill Shrine of Sri Venkateswara Swami at Tirumala on 05.12.2022. Later the TTD Chairman Sri Y.V. Subba Reddy and TTD Executive Officer Sri A.V. Dharma Reddy, I.D.E.S. presented Srivari Theertha Prasadam to the President. She also offered prayers in Sri Padmavathi Ammavari temple at Tiruchanur and prior to this, she visited Sapthagiri Gopradakshina Mandiram located at Alipiri.



'Karthika Deepotsavam' was organized by TTD in the Parade Grounds of TTD Administrative building as part of Karthika Maha Deepotsavam programme on 18.11.2022. On this auspicious occasion, TTD Executive Officer Sri A.V. Dharma Reddy, I.D.E.S. along with his wife, TTD Trust Board members, JEOs Smt Sada Bhargavi, I.A.S. (H&E) and Sri V. Veerabrahmam, I.A.S. CV&SO Sri Narasimha Kishore, I.P.S. and other higher officials and scores of devotees participated.



SAPTHAGIRI (ENGLISH) SPIRITUAL ILLUSTRATED MONTHLY Published by
Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams Printing on 25-12-2022 & posting at
Tirupati RMS Regd. with the Registrar of Newspapers for India
under RNI No.21137/1970. Postal Regd.No.TRP/153/2021-2023
"LICENCED TO POST WITHOUT PREPAYMENT No.PMGK/RNP/WPP-04(3)/2021-2023"
Posting on 5th of Every month.



VASANTHA PANCHAMI

on 26-01-2023

SIVAPRASAD